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O

CANVASSING,

A TALE.

Harriet Letitia Martin

BY

THE O'HARA FAMILY,

AUTHOR OF THE "MAYOR OF WIND GAP."

PHILADELPHIA:

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CANVASSING.

CHAPTER I.

Lord Glenville and Lord Warringdon were lounging together over a fashionable late breakfast.

"Recollect, Warringdon, you are to be with Cropper and Baines by four this morning, to hear about that girl."

"Time enough," replied Lord Warringdon, carelessly.

"You'll let her slip through your fingers, as you are going on; I see that very plainly."

"Probably," rejoined the son: "luckily, she is not the only heiress to be found in the city. Besides, to confess the truth, I am in no hurry to run my neck into the noose, if I can help it."

"*If*," replied the father, significantly.

"I think that the heir to a hundred thousand a year, well paid, and but slightly encumbered, *might* help it," retorted the son.

"*I* think," observed the father, "that five thousand a year is a tolerably fair allowance for presents to opera people, and *douceurs* to ladies' maids."

"Not when ninety-five thousand is not found too much for the same purpose," retorted the son with a sneer.

"Oh! as for that, Warringdon," replied Lord Glenville, affecting not to hear the foregoing remark; "you cannot have money in every way: you quite forget that your two last contested elections cost me fifty thousand pounds, besides having had to pay back all the money you won on that cursed Twickenham party; and then, the rascally newspapers; recollect all it cost me to make them hold their tongues. I assure you, I had to pave your way out of that business with bank-bills. I

often told you that one should never undertake a thing of the kind, unless one had nerve to go through with it. Better never win, unless you make up your mind to fight the man, if he objects to the fairness of the transaction. Don't you see, Warringdon?"

"For heaven's sake, spare me that irksome subject; we have already gone over the ground so often, that I know, by heart, all you would say. I have before assured you, that I shall never attempt recruiting my finances again in that way. With respect to the obligation you would fix on me, for arranging the affair, you must pardon my not seeing the business in the same light; had you honoured my draughts, I should not have been driven to such extremities." And so saying, his lordship pushed his cup from him, and threw back his handsome head with an air of languid haughtiness.

His father glanced at him a moment, without speaking, and then, smiling coldly, observed, "*Raison de plus*, my good fellow, for looking after the heiress."

Their tête à tête was interrupted by the entrance of a footman with the morning papers, and a packet of notes and letters. A silence of some minutes ensued, which was broken by Lord Glenville.

"Who is that letter from, Warringdon?"

"Which; this?" answered his son; pointing to one he had just carelessly thrown aside, of which the delicate hue, exquisite odour, and lightly-traced and undefined characters, breathed womanly grace and frivolity,—"Oh, aye; this is from the prettiest woman in London. I am not going to make you my confessor, though.

"No," said Lord Glenville; "the other letter."

"That? Oh, that's from the next prettiest woman in London. I *did* think her *the* prettiest *dans le bon vieux temps*, a fortnight ago."

"No, no;" said his father impatiently; "the letter you have there in your hand."

"Here it is for you," answered Lord Warringdon, tossing it towards his father; "I have not read it myself, yet; but it will keep cool, I dare say."

"Ah, very good;" observed Lord Glenville, as he cast his eye over the epistle; "I wonder you did not tell me of this before, my dear Warringdon."

"How the deuce could I, when I had not read it? What's it all about?"

"It is from Wilmot."

"Who the devil is he?" inquired Lord Warringdon.

"Wilmot! Why, don't you recollect, you wrote to canvass him, the other day? Wilmot, of Castle Wilmot, in the half-unreclaimed Irish county of ———; the husband of Lady Anne, Lord Rochford's daughter;—you recollect, don't you?"

"Oh, aye; I remember, now; what does he say?"

"I may as well read it for you," answered the father.

"Ah, no, tell it for me: I hate the reading, or hearing read, a stupid letter on business," replied the son.

"Well, he says that he will be most happy to give you his interest; he has I do not know how many thousand votes at your disposal; and is very glad that you look to a county in which your family have so large a stake, and so forth; and concludes by begging you to make his house your head-quarters:—very civil, is it not?"

"Yes," replied his son, yawning; "very great bore, though, to have to go there,—drink whisky-punch, and have my ears torn to pieces by their infernal brogue."

"Very true," remarked Lord Glenville; "you cannot, however, have the people's votes without taking a little trouble about them."

"If you would let me sit for one of your boroughs, though, I should be spared all this annoyance. Do you know, I have half a mind to pitch Wilmot, of Castle Wilmot, and his cursed county, to the devil?"

"Do so, if you like, my good fellow; but how long do you expect to be out of the King's Bench after you have performed that feat? As for the boroughs, I have already told you that I have sold them, for this time; I wanted money,—so there's an end of them till next parliament. You will walk over the course, in —— Wilmot says; what more do you want than to *be* in parliament? but it is your affair, not mine. I wish, my dear Warringdon, you would condescend to listen to me, and play with your brute some other time."

Lord Warringdon had been, in fact, amusing himself watching his superb St. Bernard's dog, tearing one of the billets, received that morning, into as many pieces as his noble master had done the feelings of its fair writer. "Ha, Monk, you rascal, you have been worrying the wrong letter; what a teaze! I did not half read it, either: so I don't know now, whether it is to-day, or to-morrow, that he takes himself off to his fair Terpsichore; leaving his *bella Tradita* to be cheered by his *fido Amico*. Capital, is it not, Monk, my boy? but if I should go the wrong day: what the devil then? Why, it will be your

fault, not mine; and that's some comfort, as times go. Jesting apart, however, it is a nuisance; I thought the fellow was tearing only my love's letter, and it turns out to be my *last* love's; a great bore, is it not?" asked this son of the nineteenth century, of his father.

"Warringdon, the subject upon which I am speaking to you is really a very serious one; and my advice, if you would please to attend to it, might be of some importance to you."

The modern father did not think, it appears, that a love affair with a married woman was an event requiring his paternal interference. "But I cannot talk with you while you look so listless; do sit down, I beg of you, and favour me with a few moment's notice."

Lord Warringdon threw himself into a Bergère, and his father proceeded.—"A canvass among these hot-headed Irish needs some care, I assure you; you must lay aside your apathy, your exclusiveness, your indifference, whether you offend or not, and for once in your life you must try to please.

"Must I?"—exclaimed his son, stretching out his finely-turned leg, and examining it with complacency.

The father did not notice the interruption and continued.—"Wilmot has the first interest in his county, and has represented it before now; but he is at present under embarrassments, I hear;—a sad fellow, for getting through money, as all his compatriotes are;—over head and ears in debt, and obliged to play hide-and-seek occasionally with his creditors, but in Ireland, that's nothing, you know,—then his wife."—

"Have mercy on me," interrupted Lord Warringdon, "are you going to give me the man's pedigree and private history, as if I wanted to write his life."

"She has the name of being a great match-maker," continued Lord Glenville; "and when she was here some years ago, was very busy *in*"—

"What the deuce is all that to me?" asked Lord Warringdon.

"It is a great deal to you;—she has daughters."

"She might have a hundred, for anything I care;" observed the young Viscount, again yawning.

"One of them is very handsome," continued Lord Glenville, "and clever; now I would caution you."

"Against falling in love with her, is it?" interrupted the son, with a languid laugh. "No fear of that, I promise you—I hate clever women, you know, and make it a rule never to fall in love with any beauties but married ones."

"I know; but take care, on the other hand, how you assume a prickly air, towards them; for that would not do either—you must admire the daughter's charms, or you will lose the father's votes."

"Never fear;—once in for the thing, I will go through it properly—I will be dazzled with their brilliancy; captivated with their accomplishments;—and driven mad by their beauty. —Oh, these cursed accomplished beauties!—the brogue, and bad roads, are nothing in comparison. French, Italian and music, conchology, phrenology, and mineralogy;—with a dash of algebra, and animal magnetism, concluding with an interlude of astronomy and mathematics. There's a bill of fare, enough to strike terror into any heart but that of an Electioneerer," and so saying, he arose, called his dog, hummed a Mazurka, and sauntered out of the room.

A few days afterwards he was in his travelling chariot, rolling off to Holyhead; we cannot better employ our time while he is on the road than by giving some idea of the family who are about to be honoured by his presence.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Wilmot, of Castle Wilmot, was what is termed in Ireland, a capital fellow;—good natured, careless, and extravagant. The owner of an estate, like most old Irish ones, a little the worse for the wear, and living away, like most such proprietors, as if the said estate was spick and span new;—in a word, just the man to be loved and robbed by an Irish tenantry and household. He had been residing abroad for some years and had just returned home to "retrench" as he says, now that he is first introduced to the reader. But alas! the claret, champagne and Burgundy, continue to be poured forth as liberally as if he were still in the land of the vines. There was a second table in his establishment, as expensive as the first; nay, a third and a fourth, which, though less delicate in the quality of their aliments, made up the difference in the quantity consumed. An ox a week, and three sheep a day, was the minimum of provision disposed of in the kitchen, and servants'-hall; and all other things were on the same "grandee" scale of expenditure. His house was always thronged with guests; high

and low, rich and poor; all had "*cead mille faltha*" at Castle Wilmot. The consequences of such a system may be easily guessed. Lady Anne, unable to stop her husband's wild profusion, at last contented herself with turning it to some purpose, and as *he* would have his house filled with company, she took care there should be a fair proportion of marrying men, at a certain ratio of fortune. By these means, she had already got three daughters off her hands; and she blessed her stars, and so did all who knew her, that she had but two remaining; for Lady Anne's reputation as a match-maker, had rendered her the terror of mothers who had sons, and the envy of those who had daughters.

No expense had been spared on the education of the Miss Wilmot's. Mr. Wilmot's residence, whether in London or on the Continent, had, from their infancy, been besieged by Masters and Mistresses; by teachers of music and teachers of languages. They had learned to dance from Coulon; to sing from Liverati; they spoke French like the *habituées* of the Faux-bourg St. Germain; Italian like Romans. Maria, the eldest of the two remaining girls, being plain, was more especially exhorted by her mother to study "the accomplishments." And Maria had sense enough to follow the advice. She did study "the accomplishments" most assiduously, and successfully. But though she spoke all manner of tongues, and played all sorts of instruments; though she dressed like a French-woman; and flirted—like any woman,—some way or other, all these perfections had hitherto been exerted in vain; Maria was still unmarried. The men agreed that she sang and played like an angel; but that she looked like—what it would not be very civil to repeat; but, which, however, some very particular friend of Maria's *did* repeat; whereupon Lady Anne marked the delinquent in her black book, and vowed that she would make him repent before he died—that is to say, marry. Lady Anne, indeed, was the more indignant at the observation, because she felt there was some truth in it. Having, through her own family, an excellent introduction for her daughters, into the best English set, she had once hoped that Maria, although plain, might, perhaps, have been fashionable; but there, again, she was baffled. Maria, though she had the two essential requisites for fashion, that is to say, intrepidity and hardiness, was considered by her *exclusive* acquaintance, as much too vivacious, ever to become perfectly high bred. Unfortunately for her, she possessed much of the humour of her country; and had, more than once, not only actually laughed herself, but had caused others to per-

petrate a similar enormity. She was, in consequence, set down as "sadly Irish," in other words, extreme *mauvais ton*; if not positively vulgar, something closely approximating to it. Maria, it appears, was not aware that although an Englishman of a certain *caste*, may perchance be induced to enjoy a jest, he never fails to pretend to undervalue the jester, whether the said jester be an amateur, or a buffoon by profession; that, conscious how much trouble a witty saying would cost himself, he imagines the gaiety of his lively neighbours to be as great an effort to them as to him; and that, therefore, when they laugh, or are brilliant, in his presence, all *that* is done by self-admitted inferiors, to please a superior. So poor Maria was accused of being very Irish.

"Next to saying I picked a bone," said she to her mother, as they chatted over a criticism reported to have been made upon her, the evening before, "or that I eat with my knife, they could not, according to their code of manners, say a worse thing of me; stupid, prosing set! I will let them see, if we come to the push, that they will have the worst of it. They don't yet know a tithe of what is in me; they imagine, because I do not talk as if I were half asleep, that it is because I cannot talk. To-morrow evening, at my uncle's, I will look, and move, and speak, so like the Lady Vapids, that no one in the room but will confess I could be as 'nice a person,' and as tiresome, as the best among them."

The powers of mimicry which Maria had hitherto restrained, she fully displayed at her uncle's, on the night of which she had spoken—allowing her fastidious censors to see what was in store for them, if they did not leave her and her Irishism unmolested.

"So, you imagine," said she to one of her critics, "that we laugh to divert you; and that, therefore, you must be gods to us. You are mistaken, my good lord, we do not laugh to amuse you, but to amuse ourselves; we laugh because we like it; because we can't help it, in fact. What would the philosopher of old, who defined man to be a laughing animal, say to you English?—you high English, I mean? Why he would say you were '*sadly* English.' I have philosophy, you see, as well as nature, on my side; so pray *do* let me laugh, and allow yourselves to laugh along with me."

Maria, thanks to her courage, kept her ground, among her fashionable associates; and she became, at last, not so much vulgar as odd; but Maria knew that men of fashion have as great an objection to odd girls, as to vulgar ones. "I see,

plainly," said she, "that I shall never be able to marry among them: but some fool or other, with money, who is out of the set, will think it a fine thing to take me, because I am in it; that is all I can expect, after all my *battling* for a place among them. Isabel, you have a better chance than I have, you are so much more quiet."

Maria was right. Her sister Isabel possessed a natural timidity which made her more fitted for the impress for English mannerism. Though not called beautiful, few could see her without feeling her to be so. Her acquirements did not bear quite so professional a stamp as those of her sister, but there was more taste evinced in the manifestation of them. Her conversation was quiet, but interesting—animated, without being positively gay; graceful, and slightly dashed with romance. Indeed, she was altogether better suited than her sister to have succeeded among the "high English." But then, Isabel Wilmot had no money; and beauty, and elegance, and accomplishments are such drugs in London! Besides, she had some strange and peculiar ways of thinking, which checked her success in life. She never could be induced to imitate her sister's "Bold strokes for a Husband;" and would even venture to remonstrate with her on such open love-making to the men.

"My dear, do not talk nonsense," her mother would say; "your sister must do as others do—as all your acquaintances either have done, are doing, or will do. Men will not make love, now-a-days; they must, therefore, be made love to;—one of your curls is out of place, my love."

And here Maria would chime in—"You are so ridiculous, Isabel—wanting to play the violet, forsooth; modest and retired, waiting to be sought for; prettily indifferent whether a hand come to cull you or not; but this might have been very right a century ago, my good child;—when the men would woo, it was perhaps right that women should wait to be wooed; but "*autres temps, autres mœurs, ma belle*,"—you violet young ladies may now remain till you wither, before any one comes to pluck you;—the men of the present day expect *us* to court *them*."

"Truly! a fitting expectation," Isabel would rejoin: 'so while they repose in their dignity, like the Eastern gentleman on his couch, we are to play the part of Bayaderes, and after we have danced and sung like Terpsichores and Syrens; after we have exhausted all our little wiles and graces, to charm their apathy, we are to think ourselves repaid, if we win a smile in return, from their high mightinesses. That I will never do—never"— she would add, earnestly.

"Don't be so emphatic about nothing at all, my dear, 'tis extreme '*mauvais ton*,'" her mother would answer. "You need not marry at all, you know, if you don't choose it; but all I wish to observe is, that if you *do* intend marrying, and marrying in a certain rank, you must not expect the men to look after *you*."

Now, Lady Anne had brought up her daughters to consider a single life as any thing rather than a life of "blessedness;" but though Isabel shivered at the thought of being an old maid, she also shrunk at the idea of running after the men, though daily exhorted to it by her dear mama's precepts, and her sister's example. She was too worldly-minded to be perfectly high-minded; and too high-minded to be perfectly worldly; so she halted between two sets of feelings and opinions;—a marrying girl—and yet a dignified one. She had both a head and a heart, and yet she aimed to establish herself among "the certain set," who, as it is proverbially said, do not care or pretend to either. She felt chilled by their coldness, taught by their hollowness, wearied by their apathy; but then, rank, fashion, fortune, floated as a bright vision before her eyes; and, like many other girls, she thought it possible, some day or other, to reconcile her ambition with her affections. In fact, she was incapable of sacrificing her feelings to her interests; but she determined never to indulge the one at the expense of the other. While in this state of vacillation, her father was obliged, in consequence of having been robbed by his local agents, to return with his family from London to Ireland, where they had been remaining now nearly two years in a solitude (comparatively speaking), very little to the taste of either of the sisters. Isabel would not listen to the soft speeches of any of her country neighbours, or haply she might have heard "something to her advantage." Amongst others, a certain Mr. McAlpine was deeply s[illegible]en with her;—of him more anon. But though the gentlemen thought her very handsome, they also thought she gave herself rather too many airs; as for the ladies, they of course abominated her; for it is allowed to a woman, by women, to be either pretty or clever; but, to be both together is unpardonable; and they, therefore, liked Maria better than Isabel, because the men did not.

Still, "though devilish ugly," according to the phraseology of her Irish male friends, Maria Wilmot was a "devilish" pleasant, off-hand girl; no London airs, like the beauty; no stuff and nonsense about her, but the truth of a good-humoured, rattling girl, "who said everything that came uppermost."

Dear gentlemen! you were never more mistaken in your lives. Maria Wilmot, with all her apparent *abandon*, never said anything for which she had not a motive. You imagined that one who incessantly talked and laughed could "have had no harm in her"—that is to say, no design upon you; and all the ill-natured things she said of her fellow-women, and all the forward ones she said to yourselves, were, therefore, set down y you to mere spirits and giddiness.

Maria, in truth, scarce ever lost presence of mind. She was cased in armour of brass, nothing touched or disconcerted her; and surely, if possession be eleven points in the law of the land, impudence is eleven points in the game of life; indeed, it is a gift as valuable as talent in man, or as beauty in woman, for it makes its possessor independent of either. We have enlarged somewhat on this point of Maria's indiosyncracy, inasmuch as without the perfect knowledge of her distinguishing characteristic, the reader might be unable fully to comprehend her future proceedings.

CHAPTER III.

On, or about the day that Lord Warringdon left London on his way to Wilmot castle, Lady Anne and her daughters were sitting in the breakfast-room of the afore-named edifice, reading, and occasionally amusing themselves by watching the rain, which poured in torrents outside the windows and even penetrated a little on their inside. Wilmot castle, originally a shooting-lodge, had only recently become (for certain cogent reasons which we do not choose to mention, but which the sheriff of its county town could guess at,) the family residence. Towers of various heights and forms, and of different orders of architecture, classic, gothic, and oriental, according to the suggestion of each successive adviser of the family, were heaped together with the coolest disregard of the suitable, the convenient, or even of the comfortable.

"What a day!" exclaimed Maria, yawning—"I wonder will my papa bring in any people from the assizes?"

"I'm sure," observed Isabel, "it is as well to be without any, as to have such creatures as he is likely to bring."

"My dear, I make it a rule," returned Maria, "to be satisfied, wherever I am, with the best the country produces, whe-

ther as regards eatables, wearables, or *flirtables*. You can't gather 'grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles:' and because I can't get pine-apples, I will not sit down and starve, if there are plenty even of good potatoes within my reach."

"That's what I call sound philosophy, Maria."

"Excellent! for it's sound sense," agreed Lady Anne, looking off her book for a moment, to commend her elder daughter's rationality.

"I assure you, Isabel," continued Maria, "if it were only to keep your hand *in*, you would do well to flirt a little now and then, with whatever God sends: 'why don't you take pattern by Miss Maria?' as old nurse says, 'you see what elegant divarsion she makes for herself, not all as one, as Miss Isabel.'"

"That's all very well for nurse to say, but—"

"But," interrupted Maria, laughing, "not very well for me to do; is that it, sentimental Isabel? For my part, I think flirting not only an agreeable, but a very salutary, pastime. A good flirting bout adds at least, ten years to *my* life. I remember when you were a pretty good hand at it, yourself, Isabel."

"So do I, too," replied Isabel smiling, "but not with such men as you are talking about—I could not flirt with a man I did not like."

"I could, then; aye, and not only flirt with him, but—marry him."

"Well!" replied Isabel, "I can much better understand a woman's marrying a man she dislikes, than flirting with one she dislikes."

"Upon what principle?" asked Maria.

"Upon the principle that a man might with great calmness suffer a rope to be placed round his neck, although he will hardly laugh, and jest, and bandy witty sayings with the hangman."

"Bravo, bravo!" exclaimed Maria, laughing, "a husband compared to a hangman! *c'est unique ma chére*—but there's Paudeen, I vow! and I dare say he brings a letter from my father."

And she started off to the hall-door to watch Paudeen, puffing and blowing, as he ascended the hill leading to the Castle. Little Paudeen was one of the *corps de reserve* composed of errand boys, and idling boys, who seemed just born into the world for no other purpose than to supply, by their little bare

legs, the occasional lapses of memory of the Castle Wilmot household.

"Murdher! we forgot to send for the salt! The beef will be spoilt intirely, for want of the salt! Where in the world is Paudeen? Till I'd make him step across the mountain for the salt."

But Paudeen would have been despatched the night before "for the tay, that was forgot to be sint for, the same time as the sugar." And one of Paudeen's compeers would be packed off for the salt. And so, Paudeen was now returning, after performing some confidental mission of this nature, from the assize town.

"How are you, Paudeen?" said Maria, finely.

"I thank your honour, Miss:" replied Paudeen, pulling out a lock of his hair, in his eagerness to make his best bow. He would have pulled off his hat if he had one.

"Well, Paudeen, did you see the master?"—

"I did, plaze your honour:" replied the hatless, shoeless page of Castle Wilmot.

"And when is he coming?" continued Maria.

"The day after to-morrow, he will be here, Miss:" rejoined Paudeen.

"And do you know what prevented his coming yesterday?"

"Waiting for the gintleman, I b'lieve, Miss."

"What gentleman?" asked Maria, briskly.

"The gintleman from England, Miss."

"What has a gentleman from England to do with the master's coming home, Paudeen?"

"Sure it has everything to do with it, wherin the gintleman is coming along with himself—came all the ways from England, a purpose to ax the masther's lave to be made a mimber of, Miss."

"Can it be Lord Warringdon, I wonder?" said Maria, thinking aloud.

"That's the name, Miss—you have it, and you got the Masther's letter, didn't you, Miss, where he tould you all about it?"

"No," answered Maria, "we got no letter."

"Faith, and he sent it, Miss, for all that, by a brother of Pat Murphy's; but 'tis my opinion, Miss, he got drunk and lost the letter; 'case you know, Miss, he loves a dhrop. So, Miss, you didn't get the bad places on the road mended, nor anything ready, Miss? To be sure what a villian he is! the masther will be mad, and no blame to him!"

Maria returned hastily to the apartment where she had left

her mother and sister. "Good people," said she, "I am the bearer of important tidings—our solitude is about to be broken in upon by no less a personage than Viscount Warringdon."

"Nonsense, Maria!" exclaimed her sister.

"Truth, Isabel."

"Who says so?" demanded Lady Anne.

"I have it on indisputable authority—that of Paudeen, who has just returned from the scene of action—where he left my father awaiting the noble Viscount's arrival."

"Very extraordinary that your father should not have mentioned this sooner!" replied Lady Anne.

"It appears that he has, in a letter, but that the letter has been lost."

"I am afraid there is not a single thing in the house fit for the reception of such a person as Lord Warringdon—do ring the bell, I must only do the best I can."

Pat Murphy answered the summons, and a few minutes afterwards his voice was heard in the servants' hall, calling out in a hasty manner, "send up Jim Flanagan to my lady."

"What for?" asked Mrs. McDonogh.

"Never you mind," was the surly rejoinder.

"Never you mind, to me! you baste! How dare you say never mind, to me?"

"I say it agin, then," rejoined Pat, "and I'd say it to the King of England, or the Pope, if he was in it, or the masther himself, when such conthrary things happen."

"Oh, then, I'll tell you one thing, my man; and mind what I say—don't be showing your ill-manners to your masther's nurse, whomsoever you may be impident too, for that would be a worse day for you than ever your worst inemy wished to you."

Pat seemed to suspect as much, for he made no answer to this denunciation, but turned round on the crowd who stood gaping and listening to the dialogue.

"Why the devil don't ye send up Jim when I bid you?"

"And how the devil could we, when he isn't in it?"

"Tunder and ages! then, where is he?"—

"Gone home, to be sure—where else would he be?"

"The curse o' Cromwell on him!" piously exclaimed Pat. "I never knew him betther than to be always *in* the way, or always *out* of it—Meehelleen, where are *you?*"

"Here!" exclaimed a little sharp voice.

"Meehelleen, *Ma vourneen,* you must go by the first light in the morning for Jim, and bid him come here, if he's alive, by eight o'clock afore breakfast; or, wait! may be 'tis as well at

once to tell him what he is wanting for; 'twill save time; so bid him take a couple o' score of min to the road, to mend the bad places—do you mind?"

"I do:" replied Meehelleen, half asleep.

"Bad luck to them scoundrels on the grand jury, that's always traversing the masther's presintments," charitably observed one of the *attachés* of the kitchen.

"You are a fool for that wish," responded Pat—"maybe if the roads were betther we'd have some company thravelling on them that mightn't be so convanient."

"A then, Pat," said a rosy-faced laundry-maid, suspected of possessing more influence over Pat's surly humour than he cared to acknowledge—"A then, tèll us, an' God bless you, who's expicted?"

"The devil and his mother!" was the lover-like answer.

"The Lord save us! don't bite our heads off, any how. The cat may look at the king—any one may ax a question, I hope."

"Well then, indeed, Peggy," remarked Mrs. McDonogh—"I think you might as well wait till your betthers were sarved, before you put your spoon in the dish; more especially when the discoorse is of family concarns; and when *I can't* get an answer, 'tis not the likes of you that will; but, indeed, I desarve no betther, when I demane myself to join such company."

In hopes, however, that Pat would, sooner or later, make the *amende honorable*, and communicate the desired information, Mrs. McDonogh retained her seat, and suspended her dignity for a season.

Indeed, like many other people of importance, she found grandeur a troublesome every-day appendage, and was not sorry to exchange, sometimes, the stiffness of housekeeper-room etiquette for the more sociable conversation of the servants' hall.

A few moment's reflection had convinced Pat of the impropriety of answering so important a personage as Mrs. McDonogh with the disrespect of which he had been guilty; and, after two or three muttered curses on the absent Jim Flanagan, he re-addressed the good lady thus:

"Well, ma'am; if I said anything out of the way, I ax your pardon: you know, yourself, I wouldn't be the one to displase the masther's dog, let alone his nurse. Sure, if I didn't love him, and all belonging to him, as I do, and if I wouldn't go to the hottest place in the other world for them, I needn't mind who comes or laves the house. There's Tom Sassenach, for you, who's always as mild as a girl the day of her wedding. He takes the world asy. The masther saved him from being

thransported, in London, and, for all that, he wouldn't help us to bate the process-server, because, indeed, he might take the law of him, for an assault upon the king's highway. God help his poor bothered English head, 'tisn't on the king's highway, at all, man, says I, for 'twas up a' *Boreen* we caught the fellow, Mrs. McDonogh, but a devil a one of Tom would lift a stick; and I'm not all's one as that mane-spirited cratur. I'd lose the last dhrop of my blood for the masther; and, you know, ma'am, that many's the time I have done what one sthroke more would have made murder of, to keep off them blood-thirsty-Orangemen of process-servers."

Pat's audience, much as they desired this exordium shortened, did not venture on imitating the means resorted to by impatient members of the Lower House, when they wish to curtail long-winded *exposés*. Pat was neither *questioned* nor *coughed down*, but suffered to say his say.—The Irish are naturally a courteous people. When it was evident he had finished, and not till then, a buzz of approbation, and of approbation only, met his ear, "True, for you, Pat, there never lived a better sarvant to a good masther, than yourself,—divil a better."

Now, in the Irish vocabulary, a good servant does not always mean the same as in the English one. In fact, a good servant, on the other side of the water, sometimes signifies an individual who may be troublesome, drunken, and negligent, even disrespectful, but who would stand up for his master's dignity, and defend his person at the peril of his own neck; very useful qualifications, it may be added, in a country, where, now and then, its gentry owe their personal liberty to their inaccessible roads and a devoted tenantry.

"At the same time," continued Pat, "that I would lay down my life for the masther, and why wouldn't I? He saved my father, in the rebellion, from dying, as none of his name ever did before him, or will afther him, if it wouldn't be myself, that might give one of the lads, with papers, a taste more of the stick than he could convaniently carry. But for all that, and well as I love him, by the powers! he sometimes makes me mad with him. Nothing must do him, but to write to ax that lord from England, that's coming to canvass the county."

Many and various were the exclamations that now arose in every variety of Irish intonation, from servant's hall and kitchen.

"Blessed Virgin, purtect us!" exclaimed Mrs. Mc Donough, "sure it's joking you are, Pat? a gintleman from England!"

"Bad cess to them villains of turkeys," cried the cook;

"there isn't one of them fit to kill! I have been breaking my heart, this fortnight past, sthriving to fatten 'em, and can't, God help me!"

"Devil a thing to ate or dhrink in the house, this blessed night!" groaned the groom. I never knew the aqual of the masther, for doin' things hand over head, without so much as telling one before he does 'em."

"That he may brake his neck, I pray God, for all the throuble he is giving us," piously aspirated the housemaid, meaning the expected stranger, however not her master.

"What matter, whether he does or not?" interrupted the coachman; "one would think, to hear ye all going on, there never was seen a jintleman in the house afore; what's good enough for the quality of the counthry is good enough for him I suppose."

"Don't bother us," said Pat; "We know that as well as you can tell us. 'Tisn't that he's better than other quality, but that he's more impudent. Them English is so d——d concated, passing their remarks on Ireland, and making their skit of all they seen, when they go back again."

"Is he young or ould, Pat," inquired the laundry-maid, making a second attempt to extract information from her uncommunicative admirer.

"What the devil does it signify, whether he is, or no?"

"'Tis you that's in the sweet timper to-night, sure enough," retorted his mistress. "It does, then, signify everything whether a gintleman coming to the house is young or ould; if he's a young, rich gintleman, who knows what good may be in sthore for one of the young ladies?"

"Oh, then, if he's any good at all, down on my binded knees this night, I pray the saints in heaven, one of the young ladies may get him. How proud I'd be, if he was to purpose for Miss Maria! she's such a darling, hearty, pleasant cratur. I wonder which of 'em it will be?"

"You may spare yourself the trouble of wondhering about it, for he'll take neither of 'em, I can tell you," said Pat. "That's the way with them English always; they'll ate you out of house and home, and then walk off with thimselves, fair and asy. But it's Miss Isabel he'd take, if he took either; she's such a darling, purty young lady."

Here a violent ringing of the parlour bell interrupted the colloquy.

"Hubbaboo!" exclaimed Pat; "I forgot, intirely, to tell ye,

my lady wants Winny directly;—skelp off this minute, like a lamp-lighter."

Winny was not very slow in obeying the summons, in hopes of learning all the particulars concerning the alarming visit.

"Winny, my good girl," said Lady Anne, "you must get the best room ready against the day after to-morrow, for a gentlemen the master has asked here."

"Ah, then, mee Lady, sure it isn't here he'll sleep."

"Why, Winny, where can he sleep but here?"

"Faicks, mee Lady, there's no sheets to put on the bed."

"No sheets! how do you mean?"

"The masther, mee Lady, that ordered widow Fahy's cow into the shrubbery, beyant, and myself didn't know the conthrariness of her, becase, mee lady, she's only a short time in the place,—widow Fahy bought her of a man in the lower parish, so I left themselves and herself together, mee lady."

"You left what together?" said Lady Anne. "I don't understand what you're talking about."

"The sheets and the cow, mee Lady."

"Oh, very well, go on," said Lady Anne.

"Well, mee lady, I wint into my dinner not thinking any hairm would happen my sheets, or I would have made my little sister stop with them; and when I come back, to look to see were they dhry, sorrow of a tatther of a sheet did I see, but a rag sticking out of her mouth."

"Out of your sister's mouth?" asked Lady Anne, who, not having been Irish bred and born, was seldom able to follow the entanglements of an Irish sentence.

"Not at all, mee lady; my little sisther wasn't in it, more is the pity. No! but stickin out of the cow's mouth it was; mee lady, the sight left my eyes when I seen it, and a wakeness came over me at the start I got."

"The upshot of it is," said Maria, "the cow has eaten the sheets; isn't that it, Winney?"

"It is, Miss: but, sure it isn't the sheets, itself, that's the worst of it. We could borrow a pair of sheets from Mrs. Molony, who's always a good warrant to lend, only for the curtains being spoiled, too."

"What! did the cow eat the curtains, too?"

"No, mee Lady, but Father John's brother!"

"Eat *them?*" exclaimed Lady Anne.

"No, mee lady, tore 'em."

"How could he tear them?"

"Father John's Brother, mee lady, that was at a wedding,

Saturday was a week, and he come here becase 'twas late for himself and his baste to be crossing the bogs.

"What has this to do with the curtains being torn?" interrupted Lady Anne.

"Sure, my lady, it has everything to do with it, seeing he was pleasant at the same time."

"What does she mean to say?" asked Lady Anne, turning to Maria, who was enjoying the dialogue between the Irish servant and English Mistress, and thought it much too pretty a one to be inclined to spoil it by a little explanation.

"I wish, Maria, you would not stand laughing there, but help me to understand this girl. "What on earth a man's being pleasant can have to do with tearing curtains, I can't imagine."

"But sure, I mane he was not himself, you know."

Lady Anne still looked puzzled.

"He tuk a sup, I mane; you understand, don't you, Miss? continued Winny, curtsying to Maria.

"To be sure I do, Winny; do you think I was born in Ireland for nothing?"

Maria was particularly anxious to stand well with the lower order, and have their good word; besides, she was, indeed, constitutionally good-humoured, and never ill-natured, except when it was her interest to be so.

"Ah," thought Winny, "Miss Maria has more sinse in her little finger, than my lady in her whole carcase. Well, Miss, to make a long story short, right or wrong, he wanted more liquor, and troth we were afeard to give it to him any more. He axed the masther then, himself, and when the masther wouldn't give it to him either, he went mad intirely. Then the masther come down to see who it was making sich a noise in the house, and when he seen who it was, he bid Pat Murphy and Paudeen carry him up to bed, and when he wasn't plazed with the reception he got, sure he tore the curtains in ribbons, and broke the bed, and destroyed the room intirely, Miss. I never seen him so pleasant, as he was that same night."

"Yes, but, Winny, that has nothing to do with the best room, you know:" observed Maria.

"Avoch, Miss, sure its of the best room I am talking. Sure its the best room he ruint this ways: sorrow may care what capers he cut any where else but there, sure that what's killing me, Miss;" continued Winny, dolefully.

"And pray," interrupted Lady Anne, in displeasure, "what possessed you to put a drunken man into the best room?"

"God sees and knows, it wasn't my fault, mee lady, but the masther's, that tould me take care, for my life, would I put him where your honour's ladyship could hear him bawling, and roaring, and going on, for fear you wouldn't be plazed with the noise he was making, mee lady; and I had no place to put him in out of the way, but the best room. Myself, and Paudeen, and Pat Murphy, and all the other girls in the house, mee lady, were striving an hour and more by the clock, to get him up the garret stairs, but it failed us; he kept kicking, and prancing, and biting like mad—sich other going on, I never seen, for all I'm used to men in liquor. So I went to tell the masther it failed us to get him up the garret-stair—an' the masther, he bid me put him in the best room. 'Faith, sir,' says I, 'I'm afeard my lady will be mad.' 'No she won't,' said he, 'do as I bid you.' Troth, my lady, I'd be very sorry to do it at any other bidding but his own."

Just at this moment a doleful exclamation from the group that had gathered round the half-opened door, attracted Maria's attention.

"Arah, Pat dear! How will this be at all! My lady will go mad intirely, and no blame to her, in regard of the spoons."

"What spoons?" asked Maria.

"The spoons of the house, Miss, that Barney Sullivan took the loan of, without lave."

"Stole, I suppose you mean," observed Maria.

"Troth, and I b'live that's only another way of saying the same thing. He borry'd them as though for his sisther's wedding—you know the one that married a son of Mark Flanagan's, a sort of a half gentleman, that must be made much of, so the masther bid me give 'em them, and when I tould the masther I could not get them of him again, if I didn't bate him, he told me not, and that he would see about him himself; but he went to the 'sizes sure, and he forgot 'em."

"And why did you not tell me, Pat, that the things in your charge were missing?"—

"A sure, my lady, didn't the masther threaten he'd banish me the place, if I let on to your ladyship about it? Faith, I'd be verry sorry to be decaving you my lady, in regard of a blackguard of his kind. Barney Sullivan is no such great frind of mine, as that I'd be telling lies to screen him from his desarvings."

"Was ever anything like this!" exclaimed Isabel, for the

first time taking a part in the conversation—she had hitherto sat silent and provoked.

"Yes," answered Maria, "there have been fifty things just like it—one would imagine you were still in Grovesnor Square, where there are no cows to eat sheets, nor Barney Sullivans to steal spoons."

"We shall be disgraced, I see clearly," said Lady Anne, in a desponding tone. "Even with the best appointed establishment, we should hardly escape the criticism of a young English gentleman of fashion: but such a castle Rack-Rent as this, would make us the ridicule of any one—and he is to be here the day after to-morrow! I really do not know which way to turn."

"We had better give out we have got the typhus fever in the house, and that we must relinquish the pleasure of his company;" said Maria—"but come, mamma, let you and Isabel take yourselves off, and I will overlook the domestic economy and settle it all capitally, you shall see."

After the door had closed on them, Maria began a review of the cellar. "The champagne is gone long ago, I know, but there's some madeira, and —"

"Madeira! Miss Maria, sorrow a dhrop in the place as mush as would blind yonr eye: the last dozen was drank the day before the masther left home:" replied Pat.

"Bad enough;" remarked Maria, "still we have the Burgundy, you know."

"Ah, then where, Miss?" inquired Pat.

"In the cellar I suppose:" answered Maria.

"Faicks and you have not, Miss, Mr. O'Higgerty got the last of it, when he gave the grand dinner to the army, last week."

"Hermitage, Frontignac, Hock, Vin de Grave, are none of them forthcoming?"

"No!"

"What does remain then?"

"Faith, Miss, it won't take long to say that—only a dozen of port, and half-a-dozen of sherry!" and such was the comfortable announcement of the state of the cellar.

"And what's to be done about the dinner, Miss!" inquired the terrified cook. "Me, that has neither duck, nor chicken, nor turkey fit to kill. I never seen such schamers of poulthry! the world wouldn't fatten 'em—just as if they done it a purpose, out of contrariness. May our blessed mother look down upon me this night, in my thruble!"

Maria's courage began to ooze out, but, however, she put a good face on the matter, and after a little consultation and recollection, the affair was arranged more creditably for the Wilmot pride than could at one time have been expected. Borrowing parties were sent out, in all directions, to repair the various wants and losses already enumerated, and, by the eventful day, Maria had the satisfaction of seeing that everything was tolerably right and proper. Lady Anne resumed her bland smiles, and Isabel began to breathe freely once more; and in this pleasing state of mind we will leave them, and return to our friend Lord Warringdon, who has just arrived at ———, and early in the morning is preparing to start for Wilmot Castle, accompanied by Mr. Wilmot himself.

CHAPTER IV.

The road to Wilmot Castle, never very good, was now, owing to the late rains, nearly impassable; and Mr. Wilmot, although he had issued strict orders to "little Paudeen" to bid Pat Murphy to tell Jim Flanagan to give "a touch of mending" to the bad places, entertained certain misgivings as to the manner in which the said orders would be executed by the said Jim Flanagan; even should the said Paudeen not have forgotten to tell the said Pat Murphy to tell the said Jim.

"I am devilishly afraid, Kelly," he said to his man, as he was stepping into bed, the evening before they were to start; "that Lord Warringdon's nice, London-built carriage will break down on the road to Wilmot Castle."

"Faith, sir, I wouldn't be surprised if it did."

"Had I not better tell him to leave it here, then? Costella will take care of it;—what do you think, Kelly?"

"Faith, sir, if you take my advice, you will say nothing about it, but leave it all to God. May be, it won't break down at all, sir; and if it does, we must only pretend to be greatly surprised on account of how bad the road is grown; or, suppose we lay the blame on the dhriver; that will do betther. Jim is to dhrive us (he is a tinant of your own, sir, from the other side o' the county); and he won't mind, a ha'parth, getting the blame instead of your road, sir; and we can make it up to him some other way, sir; it would sound so quare, sir, to be telling a

sthrange gentleman, just come to the counthry, that one hasn't a road fit for him to thravel on, sir."

"By Jove, Kelly, I believe you are right," replied the master; "no use exposing the nakedness of the land, if we can help it; and, as you say, may be, we shan't break down; and, if we do, you can give Jim half a guinea to take the blame on himself, poor devil!"

So Mr. Wilmot did not apprise his noble guest of the more than probable doom of his highly-finished, London-built carriage.

"Where is the post-boy?" asked Lord Warringdon, of a tatterdemalion figure near him.

"Is it the dhriver you are axin' about, sir,—my lord, I mane?" also asked, instead of answering (for he *was* Irish) the person addressed; and he respectfully took off a hat that had, we suppose, once been good and shaped like other hats, but that now bore evidence of hard service;—"an', sure, I 'm the boy you want, my lord."

His lordship showed some surprise at this piece of information; but Jim, though interpreting the surprise to be created by his own un-post-boy like appearance, affected to take it quite the other way.

"Faith! it's mysel', and nobody else, that's to be your dhriver, my lord; did ye think, sir,—my lord, I mane,—that my master, Misther Costelloe, would put you off wid any one but mysel'? Faith, my lord, he would be very sorry to do such a thing as that; 'tis me that always dhrives the lords and mimbers of parliament; for Misther Costelloe wouldn't let me dhrive any of the commonality, at all, good or bad, but keeps me for the grand quality intirely, such as your lordship's honour, or Mr. Wilmot; yes, indeed, I'm his grandhee dhriver, my lord." And Jim closed his harangue by giving a chuck to his femoral habiliments and a knowing look at Mike Kelly.

"So, then," said Lord Warringdon, laughing, aye, English and exclusive as he was, actually laughing at the singularly unaristocratic appearance of the 'grandee dhriver." "So, then, I am to consider it quite a compliment to have you for a coachman?"

"Oh! not to say intirely a compliment, my lord," replied Jim, twirling between finger and thumb the before-mentioned hat, and smiling and looking modest.

"Not entirely?" asked Lord Warringdon; "only almost, Jim, is that it?"

"I b'lieve this is the way it is;—a grand gintleman, like

you, my lord, would not like, may be, to be beholden to the likes of me, for a compliment; so your honour's lordship can make me any compliment you plaise, when we're parting, by and bye."

"Very well," answered Lord Warringdon, still amused at Jim's way of arranging the punctilio of obligation,—"you pay me the compliment of driving me, and I pay you a compliment of another kind, equal in value."

"Long life to your lordship's honour," cried Jim; "that's it, exactly;" and off he walked to "give a touch" to the harness.

"Jim, are those horses good?" inquired his lordship.

"Is it *my* bastes your honour's asking about? to be sure they are; don't you see 'em, my Lord?" assuming a look of extreme surprise.

"I *do* see them, Jim," replied the English lord, laughing with all the *bonhommie* of a candidate for the "sweet voices" of an Irish county; "and because I see they don't look good, I want to know from you if they really are."

"Looks are decaiteful, my lord, sometimes; them, now, are quality bastes, for all they don't seem so; the raal quality I mane, that has no concate about 'em, like your honour, for all the world; barring they don't look so like quality bastes as your honour's lordship does like a quality gintleman. But 'tisn't every one, you know, my lord, that has the chance to be born grand and iligant, and clever-looking," glancing, with a smile half shy, half-servile, at the really distinguished figure of Lord Warringdon.

Now, although the noble Viscount had read in so many bright eyes, and had even heard from so many beautiful lips, that he was one of the most *distingué* men that the owners of the said eyes and lips had ever seen, he was not so *blasé*, with respect to compliments on his personal appearance, as to hear with unconcern the impression he had made upon a ragged Irish post-boy; so he inquired no more into the merits of Jem's "bastes," but, still laughing, jumped into the carriage.

"Curious people, these Irish fellows," he observed to Mr. Wilmot, who was already seated, "how well the rogue turned off my inquiries about his horses! you could furnish all Europe with diplomatists as well as soldiers."

"Very right; we are, indeed, a most devilishly troublesome set of fellows; a nation of soldiers and cabinet ministers *en brut*, but not so difficult to manage, after all, if any one would take the trouble of trying; talk and laugh with our lower or-

ders, and you win them at once; and, since you start on this plan, I predict that your lordship will make a successful canvass; you have already, I see, made a conquest of Jim," he added, smiling: "but what are we waiting for? Kelly! bid him drive on, and pretty fast, too, or we shall be late on the road; recollect we have five-and thirty miles to go; you will excuse my taking the master on me," said he, turning to his companion; "for the miles are Irish ones, too."

"Take care, for your life, would you dhrive fast, Jim," said Kelly, as he mounted one of his master's horses, the other having been given to Lord Warringdon's gentleman-in-waiting —"Never mind what the masther says, Jim; dhrive asy, and God bless you, or you'll smash us to atoms."

"A-thin, Mr. Kelly, one would think, to hear you, you thought you were spaking to an ignoramus; sure it isn't the first time I wint his honour's roads, nor won't be the last, either, plase God! Troth, I've a right to know 'em by this time, as well as the nose in my face. I wouldn't dhrive hard, if you'd give my weight in goold, since the time I dhruv the officer's ladies up to Misther McAlpine's. They never gave me pace or ase till I wint smart; well, I done as I was bid; and, by my conscience, *if* I did, sure I smashed my pole."

"Murdher! smashed your pole! and spilt the ladies on the road, Jim?"

"Troth an' I didn't, Mr. Kelly."

"A-thin, what did ye do with them, then, Jim?"

"Dhruv 'em without a taste of a pole, good or bad."

"You did, Jim?"

"I did, in troth."

"A-thin, tell us how, and God bless ye."

"Ah! a way of my own, I have," replied Jim, looking very knowing, "An' *I* wouldn't tell id to any body, 'case I'd lose my custom, intirely, for dhriving through desperate places; there's ne'er a boy at Mr. Castelloe's but mysel' that can go that road, and come back alive; so I get all the jobs on id; and they're the best to be had any where—always worth three half-crowns more to me than any o' the others. So, Mr. Kelly, I'll do my endeavours not to smash the vahacle; but if I have that bad luck, I'll do as you bid me, purtend that it was all my own fault, or lay the blame on my poor bastes. Troth, the young Lord wasn't out in regard of 'em; they're miserable looking craturs, sure enough; they were the worst I could find in the stable; so 'twill be quite as aisy to make him think,

if he sticks in a bog-hole, 'tis all their doin's, to say nothing of the dhriver"—he added, smiling roguishly.

At length they drove off, followed by the blessings of the crowd at the inn-door, in exchange for some more substantial tokens of good will on the part of the new candidate, and that of their old and popular representative. The road lay through a wild country, with scarcely a trace of human habitation. For the first few miles they whirled along tolerably well, and Jim looked behind, every now and then, with a smile of triumph. As they proceeded, however, the jolting became "rather disagreeable." A little further on, "very disagreeable,"—and at last Lord Warringdon exclaimed at it, "as damnably disagreeable."

"Jim!" he cried "drive more carefully, you are shaking me to death!"

"Shaking you to death! my God, am I, my Lord? think o' that. I'll drive asy—that was just a bad spot that I didn't know was in id, my Lord; an' I wondher how it came in id; for this road gets the applause from all the roads in Ireland, for its goodness, my Lord—'tis as smooth as butthermilk, mostly."

"It is anything but that, now," muttered his Lordship.

Jolt after jolt came, and each time the veracious Jim assured his Lordship that "'twas the last bad spot" on this best road in Ireland.

"The devil himself must have possessed me, when I first thought of coming into this infernal country," said the wretched candidate to himself, as he looked on the dreary waste around, and felt the rocks under him. "And I dare not complain—but must grin with delight all the time I am becoming pounded into a jelly!"

"Poor devil, I pity him, really I do, upon my soul!" murmured Wilmot, as he looked on the compressed lips and contracted brows of his young companion, which bore evidence alike to the extremity of his suffering, and the heroism of his endurance,—"This road is really very bad," said he, with the tone of a man surprised at the discovery of a certain quality never before suspected to exist in an admired object—"I am afraid you are sadly shaken, my dear Lord?"

"A little," replied the Viscount, endeavouring to suppress a groan—"Oh it is nothing at all; a mere trifle. How far are we from Castle Wilmot now?"

"Not yet quite half-way," answered Mr. Wilmot.

"My God! I shall never get alive there," sighed his unfortunate companion to himself.

Mr. Wilmot did his best to beguile the tedium, and, alas! tortures, of the journey, by telling amusing anecdotes of the gentry and peasantry in his neighbourhood. Nay, he took more interesting ground, and counted up the best interests, and enlarged on the best way of conciliating them; in fact, laboured to combine instruction and entertainment in his discourse. And Lord Warringdon tried all that man could try, to laugh at his host's capital stories. He knew that, both for the sake of the jester, and for the intrinsic value of the jest, if he had a laugh in him, he should bestow it on the present occasion; but the most he could accomplish was a smile; and even that was a miserable attempt, resembling rather the convulsion effected by the galvanic battery, than the graceful indication of pleasure, which usually set off the handsome mouth of the once captivating, but now suffering "exclusive."

All he had hitherto endured, however, was but "the crumpling of the roses" compared with what followed. The concussions became absolutely terrific—a seventy-four running aground might experience something like the joltings and bumpings of our poor carriage, as it swung from side to side; now ascending to the heavens above, now descending to the depths below—now Mr. Wilmot tumbling over Lord Warringdon, and now, for variety, Lord Warringdon tumbling over Mr. Wilmot.

"What luck we had, sir," said Kelly, putting his head in at the carriage-window, and assuming a guileless, innocent expression of face, which deceived even his master—"What luck we had, to get this vagabone of a Jim to dhrive us—he's as dhrunk as a piper."

"Is he really?" inquired Mr. Wilmot.

"Sure, if he wasn't dhrunk, and as dhrunk as a baste, too," continued he, looking steadily at his master, and glancing with a smile at Lord Warringdon, who sat with his head between his hands, utterly exhausted,—"Sure if he wasn't, he wouldn't be dhriving the way he is; isn't he shaking you to bits? doesn't that show he must be dhrunk, when any one but himself, the blackguard, would dhrive so aisy, you might thread a needle, going along. I'm afraid you are terribly joulted, my Lord?" added Mr. Kelly, in a commiserating tone.

"I am half dead," faintly articulated his Lordship.

"Upon my conscience," continued Kelly, "I've the greatest mind in the world to dismount, and give that dhrunken baste of

a Jim as fine a flogging as he ever got in his life, for his impidence."

"For God's sake do not," cried Lord Warringdon, "or we shall be left on the road all night."

"Won't I my Lord? Oh, very well, I won't if your Lordship doesn't like I'd do it," replied Kelly, affecting submission to Lord Warringdon's request; "but if it wasn't for you, my Lord, upon my word and credit, Jim Naughten would be very little obleeged to himself this mornin', I can tell him that. Jim! you dhrunken baste! how dare you dhrive that way? if it wasn't for Lord Warringdon's begging you off, I'd bate you while ever I could stand over ye, you villain, ye!"

"Long life to your Lordship!" roared Jim, "long life to your honour's Lordship, Member of Parliament for the county of ——, long life to him, he's a jewel of a boy—huzza! huzza!" and he whirled his hat over his head, playing all the antics beseeming his supposed condition.

Kelly cantered to his side—"I'm proud of ye, Jim; I always knew you were the devil for dhriving—but upon my word and credit, Jim, you flog all ever I seen, for dhriving to-day. Any one but yourself, would have had the carriage in *smithereens* long ago. Faith, Jim, I think you must have a *charum* from the good people for dhriving."

"Oh! Mr. Kelly, you pay me too many compliments entirely, sir," replied Jim, trying to look abashed—"I'm proud to have your applause, but indeed, it far exceeds my desarvings, Mr. Kelly."

Jim thought no such thing; on the contrary, no praise he ever received, came up to his notions of his own merit on a bad road. "How's the masther? I'm afraid he's kilt."

"No, indeed, thank God, he isn't," replied Mr. Kelly, "he's used to it, you know, Jim."

"And the other poor cratur?" demanded Jim.

"Oh—he's bedevilled, intirely."

"A-thin is he? no wondher, troth; God knows mysel' pities him, the cratur!" and here Jim "gave a taste of the whip" to his "bastes," and Mr. Kelly fell back to do the civilities by Mr. Symmons, Lord Warringdon's gentleman; not that Mr. Kelly particularly affected Mr. Symmons, but because Mr. Kelly stood in the light of host to Mr. Symmons, who had hitherto ridden along, silent and disdainful, as if he were the very incarnation of superciliousness; Lord Warringdon's success among the wild Irish not enough interesting him to induce Mr. Symmons to compromise his own pretensions to *ton*, by

condescending to commune with such utter barbarians. At length, however, he broke silence.

"I always thought that people of fortune in Ireland, kept their carriages."

"You thought very right, Mr. Symmons," replied Mr. Kelly with his usual urbanity.

"But they are not like English ones, you know."

"To be sure they are; what else would they be like?" rejoined the Irishman of cast clothes.

"Why, English carriages are built for English roads; and Irish carriages are contrived, of course, for Irish roads."

"Irish roads!" repeated Kelly, with affected astonishment, but very genuine displeasure—"Irish roads," he continued, resuming his former tone of civility, "are like English ones, I suppose."

"Indeed, I suppose no such thing," replied Mr. Symmons.

"Why, what's the difference?" asked the other.

"Rather an important one," returned Mr. Symmons, sarcastically. "The English roads are proverbially the best in Europe; and the Irish ones, judging by my own experience, are the worst.—As for this, to be candid with you, I never saw anything like it, my good fellow."

"Well, 'tis something, any how, to see what one never seen before," replied Mr. Kelly, with provoking quietness. "May be you'll be seeing more surprising things than that again, before you lave us."

"Indeed!" rejoined the "exclusive" valet, not condescending, however, to make any inquiries touching these wonders. "Pray when shall we arrive at the next town?"

"There's no town in it," returned his companion, sulkily.

"No town!" exclaimed Mr. Symmons, much surprised. "Well, village, or whatever you call it—where can I procure a bowl of soup?"

"Cock ye up with your bowl of soup!" muttered the angry Hibernian—"ye impident, concated whelp!"—then he continued aloud—"We don't stop at any place, only to beat the horses." Kelly meant to bait, not to flagellate them, as his occasionally affected fine pronunciation might have led the reader to imagine.

"I shall be starved, man," exclaimed Mr. Symmons; "why the deuce didn't ye tell me this before?"

"Why didn't I tell you what?" inquired Mr. Kelly, composedly.

"Why, that there is nothing to be got to eat in this beg—"

he stopped abruptly, catching a glance of the Irishman's eye, which he did not think encouraged his finishing the sentence. "I meant, Mr. Kelly, to ask you why you did not tell me that there was no Inn in this part of the country, and I should then have put up a few sandwiches, or a cold chicken, or so, just to keep up my strength a little."

"To tell you the thruth, Mr. Symmons, I thought when the masthers done without could chickens, the servants might:" returned Mr. Kelly, with imperturbable composure.

"Confound the fellow's impudence!" muttered Mr. Symmons: "servants and masters, upon my word! there's radicalism and equality with a vengeance. "Lord Warringdon," he resumed, aloud, "can fast better than I can—I have a bad digestion, and have been ordered by my physician to eat frequently and at regular hours."

"The ape! I wish to the Lord I had lave of the masther to give him something of my own cooking, to help his digestion."

A silence of some moments ensued, which was broken a second time by Mr. Symmons.

"Pray, when shall we come to your master's estate?"

"My masther's estate!" cried Mr. Kelly, "sure what else have you been thravelling through, all day? and havn't half gone over it yet;" he added, with all the pride of an Irish follower.

"Humph! so all this bog," cried Mr. Symmons, laying somewhat offensive emphasis on the last word, "all this bog, then, is the Wilmot estate—" and something very like a sneer played round Mr. Symmons' mouth.

"Yes," replied Mr. Kelly, very wrathful, "all this bog, and some more bogs besides, and a great dale that isn't bog, belongs to Misther Wilmot of Wilmot Castle—the first intherest in the county, and the largest property in the province—upon my conscience!" he muttered in a lower key—"I never had so much throuble in my life to keep my hands off a concated ass of his kind, than I have this blessed minute, not just to take and chuck him, far and asy, into the middle of that same bog he's passing his remark upon, so mighty busy!"

"I cannot imagine," proceeded Mr. Symmons, "where all your voters come from—I have not seen a house yet, nor a tree, nor anything giving one the idea of human habitation. You know the capital stories we have in England about Irish voters?" he went on facetiously—"shall I tell you one of them?"

"I'd advise ye not:" answered Kelly, speaking very quietly,

but looking as if he were just in the humour to enforce his recommendation if necessary by some argument more cogent than words.

Just then, luckily perhaps, for Mr. Symmons' bones, Mr. Kelly's attention was attracted towards Jim, whose cries of "Hee-up! hee-up!" resounded in every note of the Irish scale of intonation; and then Jim chirped, coaxed, and cursed, talked, exhorted, and flogged; did everything in his power, in fact, by reason and coercion, to induce his horses to get out of the bog-hole, into which they had sunk up to their shoulders; but, alas the harder he flogged, the deeper they floundered—he was at his wit's ends.

"What's the matter, Jim?" inquired Kelly, who had seen the confusion, while engaged in his amiable colloquy with Mr. Symmons, and had hastened to learn the cause. "What's the matter, Jim?" he repeated.

"Oh! my God!" returned Jim, impatiently—"havn't ye eyes in your head, man? don't ye see what's the matther? I'm bogged, and, more be token, 'twas in this very same place I smashed my pole in, last year: "the curse of the cross upon it!'"

"Give 'em a taste of the whip, Jim."

"Give 'em a taste of the divil! A-thin, Mr. Kelly, will ye jist throw a look at the craturs, and see the condition they are in—up to their shoulders in bog! What's this for, at all?" roared Jim, tearing his hair in desperation and flinging his hat on the ground—"What in the world will I do? Mr. Kelly—God bless you! and tell me what's to become of us, at all!"

"What are you stopping for?" cried Mr. Wilmot from one window. "Has any accident happened the carriage?" cried Lord Warringdon, from the other.

"No sir—no my lord:" replied the veracious worthies addressed—"nothing at all, only a bit o' the harness that wint wrong."

"Mr. Kelly—" re-demanded Jim, half-crying, "what will I do at all?"

Mr. Kelly mused a second; then mounted the coach-box—surveyed the country in all directions; and his face suddenly brightened—"Now we have it!" he exclaimed, joyfully—and placing his bent fingers in his mouth, whistled shrilly and long. Almost immediately, figures were discernible, moving along the brow of a hill, that skirted the road—and in less than five minutes, fifty or sixty stout fellows came jumping and hollowing across the bog.

"Glory be to the Lord, for all his mercies this day!" sighed Jim, making the sign of the cross.

"We are going to be robbed and murdered:" thought Mr. Symmons—"these Irish monsters are capable of any atrocity;" and he was preparing to save himself from the ferocious Mountaineers, by clapping spurs to his horse, but was prevented by a command from his master to examine into the state of the springs of the carriage; Lord Warringdon having certain misgivings as to the dependence to be placed on Jim's assertion, "that nothing at all was the matter."

When the group of peasants saw that Mr. Wilmot was one of the *bogged* travellers, they threw up their hats and shouted for joy.

"Here! boys!" cried Kelly, "lift it out, body and bones—horses and all! first three cheers for the masther, and then put your shoulders to the wheels—here it goes! a long pull, a sthrong pull, and a pull altogether! now boys!"

As desired, they gave first the three cheers, so long and loud, that Lord Warringdon pressed his hands to his ears—they then "put their shoulders to the wheel," and placed the carriage once more on Terra Firma.

"Thank ye, my men:" said Mr. Wilmot.

"Thank ye, my fine fellows:" said Lord Warringdon.

"Ye're welcome, ye're welcome, to that, and more;" returned they, good-humouredly.

"This is Lord Warringdon, come to canvass the county;" observed Mr. Wilmot.

"And yourselves, my honest fellows among the number;"—added Lord Warringdon.

"Och! the masther is the one you must ax, my lord:" replied the spokesman, with a smile—"we always vote the way the masther plazes, you know;" he added, however, with the courtesy characteristic, (in those days,) of an Irish peasant, and more particularly of a ——— Irish peasant. "Not but, indeed, we'd be glad, t'would be for your honour's lordship, he'd bid us vote; ye're welcome to Ireland, and to the county of ———."

"Thank ye, thank ye, my honest fellows—here's a couple of guineas to drink your master's health."

"And here's something to drink success to Lord Warringdon;" said Mr. Wilmot.

"Long life to ye both!" cried many voices—"the masther and the masther's frind for ever!"

"Lord Warringdon for ever!" cried Mr. Wilmot, who de-

sired to give the candidate a more definite designation than that of "the masther's friend."

"Warringdon for ever!" they echoed—"Warringdon and Wilmot for ever! huzza! huzza!" and they shouted after the departing travellers, with all the energy and deafening clamour of three-score of Irishmen, with money in their pockets and good will in their hearts.

"Well, misther Symmons, what do ye think of Irish '*voters*,' now? what would ye think to tell one of them boys the comical stories ye have in England about 'em?"

Mr. Symmons was pleased to observe that "they were fine fellows," and there the conversation ended.

The road began to improve as they drew near to Castle Wilmot. Traces of Jim Flanagan's handy-work became apparent, by the diminution of jolts and accession of speed. Lord Warringdon, over-powered with fatigue, had sunk into a pleasing oblivion of aching bones. Mr. Wilmot amused himself with his thoughts. Mr. Symmons was grand—Mr. Kelly, and his humble friend, and ardent admirer, Jim Naughton, agreed that the above-mentioned Mr. Symmons "was a fantastical *omadhoun*, that would never be good for anything till he got a taste of the shillelagh;" and thus all journeyed along, until the plantations of Castle Wilmot gladdened their sight. Bonfires were burning on all the heights, far and near, in honour of the master's return. A huge one was blazing at the Castle Wilmot gate, in honour of their noble guest; and much whiskey was drunk, and much tobacco smoked, to testify their joy on his arrival; "lashins," of both those luxuries having been sent out by Lady Anne. Lord Warringdon was aroused from his slumber at ten o'clock at night, by a shout of welcome. In the confusion of the moment, he forgot where he was, and seeing the huge fire, and the wild countenances and tattered garb of the revellers gathered round it, he half-imagined he might have fallen among a set of Irish cannibals, who had prepared a fire to roast him at. This delusion was, however, but momentary. Mr. Wilmot's kind voice, bidding him welcome, recalled him to a sense of his real situation. He alighted, but could scarcely stand, so crippled, jolted, and bruised was he. As the mob huzzaed, he tried to bow and smile, however, and although nearly driven mad by the deep guttural roar of the men, and the shrill scream of the women and children, expressed himself delighted beyond measure at their flattering reception.

"Ye'ar late, sir;" observed Pat Murphy, as he led the way,

with lights into the house. "My lady, and the young ladies, was mighty unasy about you're not coming to dinner, sir."

"The road was so bad," returned his master, "we could not come sooner."

"The road bad? was it indeed, sir?" exclaimed Pat, "'tis newly come to it, that's all I can say—ye're welcome, my lord."

"Thank ye, my good fellow:" replied his Lordship.

"Are you lame, my lord? you seem to thread tinder."

"No—only stiff from the jolting:" he replied.

"That Jim must dhruv ye mighty bad;" observed Pat.

"Bring us something to eat, directly, Pat;" said Mr. Wilmot, and meantime allow me to pioneer you to the drawing-room, my lord."

But his lordship objected to appearing in such trim before ladies; it was therefore arranged that they should sup by themselves in another room; and defer the presentation till to-morrow.

CHAPTER VI.

For some days after his arrival at Castle-Wilmot, Lord Warringdon continued to feel the effects of Mr. Wilmot's roads, and Jim Naughton's driving. Nothing, however, could be more polite than were his assurances of satisfaction, and, indeed, admiration, of all he saw and heard, ate and drank, at Castle Wilmot.

"My journey," said he, smiling, "seems quite like an incident, in a fairy tale. After having wandered through grand and expansive solitudes, under the care of a powerful enchanter, at a stroke of his wand, the scene changes, and I find myself in a noble and ancient castle, surrounded by luxuries of every description; by all that can charm the eye, or gratify the taste; and, though last mentioned, not the least appreciated, the smiles of fair and gentle ladies."

Under the united influences of capital living (he had game and fish in perfection and abundance) and of cheerful society, Lord Warringdon was "the moral of a nice gentleman," if Pat Murphy be considered good authority;—we think that he is.

In fact, the candidate continued in high good humour, amused at everything, and even, in his turn, condescended to amuse.

"Amuse! Warringdon amuse! why he is one of us, you know; the thing is impossible!"

Dear people! we crave a moment's explanation. In the first place, pray recollect that your noble and apathetic brother is no longer in town; alas! not even in his elegant retirement in the country: nay, that he no longer treads English soil, "at all, at all; that, in fact, he is in Ireland. Now, unfortunately, there is something in the very air of Ireland which acts on the most pertinaciously rigid muscles, and makes those laugh who never laughed before, and never may again. In the second place, recollect that man is a gregarious animal. The individual, separated by some unlucky chance from his own herd, will fall in with another herd of his species. In the third place, consider he was not only alone in a country were apathy is ignorantly mistaken for stupidity, but also that he was absolutely necessitated, as a candidate, to make himself popular; and now, have we, even partially, succeeded in vindicating your erring friend?

But, to continue, as we, story-tellers, say:

The young lord, recollecting his father's caution concerning Lady Anne's match-making talents, observed her carefully; and to his surprise and satisfaction, found in her habitual manner a decided refutation of the alleged gift.

Her ladyship had been very pretty; she was still interesting, and even loveable; and there were about her a softness and simplicity almost approaching *naïveté*, which quite percluded the supposition of the existence of *arriéres pensées* of any kind. All seemed clear and open as the noon-day.

"What a fool my father must be," thought the experienced Viscount, "to have suspected such an unaffected, unartificial woman as this is, of being a match-maker! I never yet knew him form a correct estimate of character;" and so, principally that he might have the satisfaction of proving his father wrong, he was unwittingly running the road to prove him right.

But Lady Anne only puzzled Lord Warringdon. She was, in truth, a consummate actress: a female Proteus, who, if it became absolutely necessary, could change, at will, her very nature. She followed, to the very letter, the scriptural injunction of "being all things to all men;" and her facility in penetrating the motives and views of others fully equalled the variety and perfection of her own powers of transformation. She instantly

saw, therefore, what was likely "to take" with Lord Warringdon, and manœuvred accordingly.

Upon hearing of his intended visit, she had arranged, at once to marry him to one of her daughters; but could not decide which, till she should have slightly studied the "*carte du pays.*"

"Though educated with precisely the same care, my two unmarried girls are provokingly dissimilar," she said to herself; *to herself*, observe; for think not that Lady Anne kept any other confidante: "had Isabel Maria's good sense, or had Maria Isabel's beauty, I never could meet any difficulties in my path. But I am, at present, placed thus: this man may, perhaps, be attracted by Isabel's beauty; but if he should happen to prove ugly, or silly, the world will not get Isabel to take any pains about him. Again; Maria, who would make no difficulty as to taking him, *he* may not choose to have;—and so, and in this teasing way, I am continually thwarted in my best-laid plans."

After the Viscount's arrival, and that she had reconnoitred him, Lady Anne decided on marrying him to her youngest daughter. She felt, however, rather unwilling to hurt Maria's feelings by abruptly announcing her fiat; and trusted, therefore, to some favourable occasion for indirectly conveying it.

She and Maria were sitting alone, soon after the appearance of their guest.

"I have been studying Warringdon's character very carefully," observed Lady Anne, "and he is suspicious."

"Most young men of fortune are," rejoined Maria.

"I know:" returned Lady Anne, "*that*, however, I don't so much mind; one could easily throw him off his guard. But I'm sorry to say he is a thorough man of the world; has no feeling; never will fall in love."

"'Tisn't necessary that he should," said Maria, rising to poke the fire.

"Not always necessary, I grant you; but certainly highly desirable; and, in this case, I fear, absolutely indispensable."

"Why?" asked Maria.

"Because," answered her mother, "he is not the sort of man one can easily persuade to fancy himself in love, when he is not; neither is he the sort of man to commit himself, by some nonsensical speech, that means nothing, but which a girl's family choose to call something, and which a father, or a brother, calls him out for; in a word, he is a man never carried away by feeling; always on his guard not to say what might be made a handle of against him on some future occasion; cold and cautious, though apparently the very reverse."

"Bad materials for *our* purpose," observed Maria; "but your conclusions jump with my own, mamma; and so *I*, at any rate, must consider them to be well founded; and it is clear that I can have no chance, and Isabel, I fear, but a bad one."

Lady Anne secretly rejoiced at this voluntary renouncing of all claims on Lord Warringdon, on Maria's part; yet seemingly acquiescing in her daughter's opinion, observed, "I believe you are right; and, since you give up the pursuit, Maria, we must jointly take measures in favour of Isabel; for, although I do consider it difficult to manage him, I do *not*, by any means, look upon it as impossible. To begin our one little plot, then:—whatever either of us may think of Warringdon, we must say nothing to Isabel on the subject, but deceive her, like a child, for her own good—she must imagine herself captivated by him, or she will never even try to attract him; that is, in a serious, business-like way—you know all her romantic nonsense about affections and sympathies. Now, Warringdon is incapable of loving anything but himself, but she must not think so, or she would not love him."

"But what is the use of making her love him," interrupted Maria, "or even fancy she does, if he be, as you say, too cold to fall in love, himself, and too cunning to suffer any body to marry him, if he does *not?*"

"Very true," rejoined Lady Anne, "but I will make *him*, too, dream that he is in love."

"Dream it!" exclaimed Maria, laughing, "is it a *blasé* man like that? dear mamma! what can you be thinking of?—a simple boy, just come of age, brought up in a country clergyman's family, one might possibly persuade out of his own senses; but, even you," she added, playfully tapping her mother's cheek, "would fail in such an experiment on a man about town, like our right honourable and well esteemed guest, Viscount Warringdon—dream it, indeed!—never—never!"

Lady Anne listened with the utmost composure to her daughter's mockery, and proceeded thus:—"The difficulty you state is a considerable one, I admit, indeed I have before hinted it myself—yet, I hope, by my mode of attack, to prove it is not, at least, insuperable—Lord Warringdon, wherever he goes, finds himself an object of attraction to daughters, and of speculation to mothers—he is therefore continually on the *qui vive*, like the garrison of a besieged town, in fear of a *coup de main*, in fact, he is—mark me, on his guard against *designing* mammas; but in me he shall nothing find save simplicity and innocence."

"Yes, but as you want him to devour Isabel, and not yourself, what good will all the simplicity and innocence in the world, on your part, signify?" interrupted Maria, with a laugh.

"You must give me time, my dear Maria, to develope my plans. He never can suspect so indifferent and unguarded a mother as I shall appear to him to be; he must acquit me, at once, of deep design—of malice prepense—of premeditated evil. More than that. I shall make him think not only that I do not want his alliance, but that I actually avoid it."

"And how will you contrive that?"

"By appearing to have somebody else in view for Isabel."

"That would be an excellent method certainly, but who can you have in view?"

"McAlpine," replied Lady Anne.

"McAlpine!" echoed Maria; "Warringdon will never think that you could prefer such a creature to him."

"Yes, he must though; for I shall give him to understand that Isabel is engaged to McAlpine. You know he is dying for her, and the least encouragement would be enough to bring him to her feet."

"Yes," said Maria, "but Isabel will never consent to a project so full of what she would call artifice and deception."

"I don't intend that she shall know we have any project of the kind—I shall persuade her that I really wish her to marry McAlpine."

"Still I cannot see, for the life of me, how persuading her to marry McAlpine, is to be the means of marrying her to Warringdon."

"You are really very dull this morning, my dear Maria. I do not intend, of course, *absolutely* persuading her to marry Mc Alpine, only making her and every one else think that I do."

"Ah, yes, now I understand your meaning perfectly," rejoined Maria, "but if Warringdon is not in love with her, himself, what will he care whom she marries?"

"I know human nature, at least, men-of-fashion-nature, better than you do, Maria. Lord Warringdon is a man of pretension, vain of his person, vain of his fashion, vain of his rank and position in society, vain of his talent (he has some), he cannot, therefore, exist without being admired; his vanity then will be gratified by the preference which Isabel will unconsciously betray, for she is a bad dissembler—and, on the other hand, he will be piqued by my apparent negligence—so, to spite the mother, he will marry the daughter—is not that a tolerable scheme?"

"Very," answered Maria, musing.

"And feasible?" asked her mother.

"Humph, as for that, I have my doubts; to me it appears somewhat theoretical."

"I wager you a Chantilly veil I succeed," said Lady Anne, smiling.

"Done!" cried Maria. And here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of visitors.

CHAPTER VI.

Upon all his canvassing visits, within riding distance, Lord Warringdon was accompanied by the young ladies as well as by their father; Lady Anne's object being to establish a certain intimacy between the parties, before she stepped in, with Mr. McAlpine, in her hand, to break it up. These excursions were, like most equestrian parties of ladies and gentlemen, highly favourable for beginning and continuing a flirtation. Indeed, Lady Anne insisted that riding was infinitely more useful than walking for getting on with the men, combining, as she said, the advantages of a tête à tête (which you can always manage without having the air of arranging), with all the gaiety and frankness warranted by social manners and intercourse. Then, ladies are timid on horseback, and require many little offices of gallantry and protection; (by the way, it is remarkable a woman seldom screams outright, though ever so scared, if the man she wishes to attract be at her side; her ear-piercing appeal being reserved to arouse a dull, a careless, or a straying attendant.)

Upon the favourable occasions alluded to, Isabel scarce ever pretended to be alarmed, however,—we can say so much for her; but, when a little frightened, at her horse sticking in a bog, or backing towards the edge of a precipice, on a mountain road, she certainly affected to be more so; encouraging, in fact, rather than contending with her fears; for, though not tutored by her mother, Isabel was aware how interesting a woman appears to a man when claiming, evidently against her own will, or design, his protection.

Well, the Viscount proved a very attentive cavalier; why so? as much for the sake of the daughter's beauty, as the fa-

ther's votes? Ask Lady Anne. But Lord Warringdon, himself, said *to* himself, that she chatted agreeably; was well-mannered, and, altogether, "a very nice person."

Poor Isabel, on her part, was even better disposed towards him.—In her eyes he appeared to be more than "a very nice person;"—he was a loveable one. She thought him strikingly handsome, and possessing all the polish of high breeding, without its coldness. We must add that he could be agreeable, too, in many ways; among the rest, by telling anecdotes of people known to his auditors, either personally or by report; or by repeating good things which he had heard; and, as the actor often gets more credit by his personification of a character than the author for its delineation of it, so Lord Warringdon earned from Isabel a reputation for cleverness, merely on the strength of his recollections, and adaptation of the cleverness of others. To conclude; he had spent much time abroad; spoke the foreign languages well,—for an Englishman, surprisingly well; knew a little of many things, and took the tone of knowing a great deal of all: in a word, was just the one to be a pleasant fellow among men and a "nice creature" among women.

But suppose the Viscount had not been heir to an earldom, and a hundred thousand per annum, very little encumbered? Would Isabel's usual penetration have failed, in that case, to discern in him some points less to his advantage? Again we say, ask Lady Anne. And, like another personage, not to be named, just as we speak of her ladyship, she re-appears on the scene.

The time had come to avail herself of Mr. McAlpine;—she was a little puzzled how to get at him; Mr. Wilmot entered the room with a letter in his hand, announcing Mr. McAlpine's intended arrival that evening, to dinner.

Lord Warringdon and Isabel had been looking over some music, and he was requesting her to sing, and she was preparing to oblige him, when her mother exclaimed "Good news Isabel, McAlpine is to be here almost immediately; so run off," she continued, in a lower tone, but still loud enough to be overheard by Lord Warringdon, "run off and dress; I want you to be in your best looks to-day."

Isabel stared in astonishment.—Her mother smiled:—Isabel was completely at fault.

"It is not time to dress yet," she observed, returning to the instrument.

"Isabel," resumed her mother, "I wish to speak with you a moment." And so saying she left the room, followed by her

daughter, who could not help wondering why Mr. McAlpine's arrival should be such good news to her, seeing she abominated him; and why she should take more pains with her toilette on this day than on any preceding one.

Her mother addressed her thus:

"My dear Isabel, I have particular reasons, which I will explain to you some other time, for wishing you to please McAlpine."

"But I cannot endure him, mamma; you know I cannot," interrupted Isabel.

"He is a worthy, excellent young man, and would make you a very good husband."

"God forbid!" returned Isabel; "I would rather die than marry him."

"Folly, my dear; any one who had not a prior attachment might very well contrive to marry him, and to like him very well, too; and pray do you like any one else?"

"No;" replied Isabel, blushing and hesitating.

"Very well, then," observed Lady Anne, "I request that, since you have nothing to object against Mr. McAlpine, except that you do not happen to be desperately in love with him, you will treat with more consideration than hitherto you have been pleased to do; and also that you will henceforward think and act like other young women of your age and station, and not reject eligible offers because 'this man is too tall;' that 'too short;' one "too fair;' another 'too dark;' sombody else because he doesn't sing; and somebody else because he sings too much: your father can give you no money, and you are no longer a mere child; I would advise you, as your sincere friend, as well as your affectionatie mother, to consider your position well, and if Mr. McAlpine remain favourably disposed towards you, to accept his attentions; it will be much better than riding about, talking nonsense to Lord Warringdon, who will be off, to-morrow or next day, and if he happen to see you again, scarce remember you, perhaps."

Isabel coloured deeply, partly from confusion, and partly from indignation at her mother's supposition, but she remained silent.

"Do, my sweet Isabel, do as I wish you," continued Lady Anne, kissing her cheek; "you never will repent having followed my advice."

She then quitted Isabel, who did not return for some time to the sitting room. That she had not passed the interval in very agreeable meditations might be inferred from a slight redness about her eyes, and a languor and dejection of manner, that

struck and interested Lord Warringdon. He thought she had never looked so well; he told her so, and her pale cheek glowed, and she looked away for a moment, and when their eyes met again, hers were filled with tears.

"Lord Warringdon," said Mr. Wilmot, "before McAlpine comes, I must tell you what sort of person you are about to see. First, as the most important point, what he has,—then what he is: he has ten thousand a year, unencumbered; *that*, you will say, concerns Maria and Isabel more than you,—but, however, this concerns you,—he has the next best interest to mine in the county;—in politics he is a staunch tory, and so he is likely to remain, for he has not yet half provided for his poor relations." (N. B. This was in the good, the halcyon days of toryism in Ireland, when the favorite candidate was sure to be the one who would bestow, or promise, at least, the greatest number of places.) Mr. Wilmot proceeded: "Mr. McAlpine and I are excellent friends; that's to say, we don't either of us care if the other broke his neck."

"My dear! my dear!" interrupted Lady Anne, "how can you talk so carelessly? Lord Warringdon will really believe you are serious; very extraordinary under our peculiar circumstances;" looking over at Isabel, "you should not, indeed, my love, say such things; really it is quite shocking." She said this in a hurried, deprecating tone, and then, resuming her usual manner,—"recollect the liberal support he has always afforded you, without stipulations of any kind, for a single friend."

"Oh, I recollect perfectly," replied her husband, laughing; "he monopolizes all my interest on the plea that he had not bargained, like others, before-hand. By Jove! his support was like the barbarian allies of the Roman empire, a service that cost dearer than his enmity."

Lady Anne fidgeted about while he was speaking, and seemed exceedingly annoyed, but why he could not well comprehend, not being aware that Mr. McAlpine's failings were a forbidden subject at Wilmot castle, so he continued:—"Though my friend, McAlpine, is the soul of honour, take care that you have witnesses to your conversation, or ——— no matter what," he added, with a laugh. "But only if you have not a friend present, you may have to employ one on less amiable business some future day, as I was once obliged to do; and my friend McAlpine then immediately remembered all he had forgotten. Pistols are wonderful helps to a treacherous memory."

"Did you ever hear anything like your father?" exclaimed Lady Anne, addressing her eldest daughter, "to talk in such a way of McAlpine before Isabel—highly impr oper."

"What's improper?" inquired Mr. Wilmot.

Lady Anne remained silent, shaking her pretty little foot in assumed displeasure.

"What's improper, Anne, my love?" inquired he once more.

"Your abuse of Mr. McAlpine, my dear."

"My abuse! I am not abusing the man at all. I don't care about him one way or the other."

"Yes! but that is the very thing I complain of,—you ought to care."

"Why, my love?"

"My dear Wilmot," rejoined Lady Anne, "you must forget, surely."

"I can't imagine," said he to himself, "what the devil she is at."

The rapid approach of horsemen up the ascent to the castle turned the conversation. A few minutes afterwards, Mr. McAlpine made his appearance amid the group.

"Delighted to see you," said Lady Anne, in her softest tone of welcome.

"How dy'e do, my dear fellow," said Mr. Wilmot, "glad to see you;"—and Mr. Wilmot *was* glad to see him, because it happened to be in his own house, and there his greatest enemy would no longer be treated, or even considered as such. We shall take advantage of the half hour before dinner to give a sketch of the *morale* and *physique* of Mr. McAlpine, of McAlpine Castle.

To begin with his outward man, that being the most important division of the two-fold nature of a young male acquaintance. Mr. McAlpine was considered by all who had the pleasure of knowing him, (except himself,) as a specially ill-looking person. 'Tis fair to state, however, what really *was* his appearance, in order that our readers may judge whether he or his acquaintances were right. He was very tall, and very thin, with a very short body and very long limbs, that were always straying about to all points of the compass, as if each was setting forward, by itself, on a voyage of discovery through the world; his hair was very red, his eyes very white, his teeth very yellow, his mouth very wide, and his nose very broad; so far for his person. With respect to his mind, Nature had dealt a little more favourably with him. Originally he had not been quite deficient in intellect; but, unfortunately, his early education had been neglected; in fact Mr. McAlpine arrived at years of discretion before he became heir-at-law to his present estate, seven or eight good people having been in the entail upon it:

gradually, however they died without "issue in tail male;" and when he succeeded to the property, he could barely read and write. He had sufficient good sense, however, to feel his deficiencies, and gave a still rarer proof of understanding by endeavouring to remedy them; he bought good books, and read and profited by them, and thus effected wonders; but, unluckily, he imagined, comparing himself with himself, that as he now knew much more than he formerly had done, he actually knew more than any one had ever known before him. Eventually he decided in his own mind that nothing could equal him in knowledge or beauty, and consequently put a high price on himself "in the marrying way;" and though he was always talking of taking a wife, never could be induced to decide, lest he might, as he said, "throw himself away." While he was thus deliberating, Isabel Wilmot returned from the Continent, the theme of universal admiration. He soon came to the solemn determination "that she was just the person worthy of becoming Mrs. McAlpine." He did not, however, say too much in commendation of her, lest he should raise the market on himself; only pronouncing her to be "a nice girl, certainly, and if married to a man she loved, one that would turn out a charming woman; but all depended on that; at present she thinks too much of herself a great *dale*." Occasionally Mr. McAlpine's pronunciation was somewhat broad, and formed a curious and amusing contrast with his high flown style and sentimentality. "She wants animation," (we mark thus a peculiar drawling emphasis in Mr. McAlpine's articulation,) "because as yet she is indifferent about *plasing*, but once let her love a man of a certain order of mind, and she will be absolutely seraphic—she's clever, and accomplished, and beautiful; but she's not, as yet, interesting, because, as yet, she has not loved." So, to give the finishing touch to Isabel's perfections, he did all in his power to inspire her with a passion; but the young lady, some way, was deficient in taste as well as gratitude, and by no means seconded Mr. McAlpine's benevolent views for her improvement.

Maria thought it a thousand pities that the owner of McAlpine Castle should be lost to the family, so she laughed, and talked, and laboured, might and main, to get into his good graces,—all to no purpose; a pleasant, lively, off-hand girl, was his detestation. Take notice, Mr. Mc Alpine was all romance and refinement. "Maria Wilmot has no softness, no sentiment, no manner; besides, I MUST have, he would sometimes say, grinning, and displaying his terrific set of teeth, besides I MUST have a fine woman—that is an indispensable necessary of life

to me; beauty is the aliment of *my* existence. No—if I take either, it shall be Isabel. I fix on her." But though he fixed upon Isabel, Isabel did not fix upon him; he continued, however, to call her stiffness, reserve, and her coldness, modesty; never for an instant suspected they could be anything else, where he was in question.

Lady Anne had not quite yet decided whether she should make her younger daughter marry him, or make him marry her elder, when the arrival of Lord Warringdon caused her to change the whole plan of operations. She now courted him upon the principle that we offer a plate of meat to one lap-dog, intended for another—by the way, this neat and appropriate simile reminds us that it is time to return to our family party, whom we left counting the minutes until dinner should be announced.

CHAPTER VII.

All are now seated at dinner. Lord Warringdon's thoughts and attentions (we will not say his affections, because, like lady Anne, we are not quite sure he has any) are divided between a plate of salmon, just out of the water, and the pretty downcast eyes of his fair and flirting equestrian companion, Isabel. But when we state that his attentions were thus divided, we do not take upon ourselves to assert that the division was perfectly equal, it might be, perhaps, somewhat like an Irish halving of a thing—one half a little bigger than the other; perhaps, also, the bigger one might not have fallen to the lady's share. Under the circumstances of the case, however, she might consider herself peculiarly fortunate in having any portion at all; for a man of modern times, who thinks of the lady of his love, when he has anything else to think of, particularly so good a thing as salmon in season, gives a proof of the depth and intensity of his passion, equal to that which blowing out his brains would have been some forty years ago. Isabel, however, had been placed by her mother in precisely the position best calculated to ensure as much worship as was possible, to be, namely, just opposite the viscount; so that whenever his eyes were off his plate, they naturally fell on his vis à vis. And, what we look at, Lady Anne knew, we think of; and indeed Lord

Warringdon was obliging enough not only to think of Isabel, but to think of her all that lady Anne was anxious he should think, viz., that "she was a very lovely girl, that she seemed to be very much inclined to fall in love with him, and that it was a great pity to give so much beauty and taste to such a stupid ugly fellow as McAlpine;" said ugly fellow being at the moment whispering with his mouth full, sundry soft things to his fair, but listless neighbour, and, in the earnestness of his discourse, leaning across her plate, and staring full in her face, with his large white eyes, which he rolled about in the most approved style of *loverism*. Isabel would have pawned a joint of her pretty taper finger to have dared turn her back on him, or to slap his face; and in her struggles to conceal her disgust, for she knew that her mother's eye was fixed on her, she became silent and constrained. Now, any other man but McAlpine would have been hereupon offended—he, on the contrary was charmed, for he interpreted the care with which she avoided his soft glances, or interrupted his compliments, as undeniable proofs of a tender and absorbing passion, which, from maidenly reserve, she laboured to conceal.

"Why did you not wait for the gentleman you speak of?" she asked, eagerly seizing on an observation just made, to turn his attention from her beauty and his own admiration.

"Because," answered he, "Mr. Barham was not quite ready to accompany me—and I could not wait; for," lowering his voice into a whisper, soft and tender as that of the boy-god himself, he added, "I was languishing for a *bame* (beam) from the sun of my soul, fair Isabel's bright eyes—for what is existence to *me* when absent from *her*, the source of light, and life, and hope!"

"But don't you think he may be offended?" inquired Isabel, not appearing to notice his twaddle.

"I explained to him that I had important avocations at McAlpine Castle, which would prevent my having the pleasure of accompanying him there. I have been expecting him these three days past, and am half surprised I did not meet him here, spell-bound by the fascinations of the captivating enchantress of Wilmot Castle—the fair Isabella—that cruel but charming creature—whose gaze is death—who lures but to destroy."—

A loud knocking at the hall-door, interrupted Mr. Mc Alpine's speech—and caused such a sensation, among the whole party, as would scarcely be credited, except by those who know by experience what can be effected by the most trifling

occurrence which promises to break up the usual routine of a country-house life. While every one was wondering who it could be, and each sat with his or her knife or fork arrested, as if by a spell, in his or her hand; while all ears were eagerly bent to catch the glory due to first discoverers; and while all eyes were riveted, as if they possessed the property of lynx vision, and would pierce the very walls; the door was softly opened, and father John Molloy stole on tip-toe, into the room.

"Mercy on us! 'tis only you, father John!" exclaimed Maria. "I thought it was some prince in disguise, come to crave hospitality, and who, in return for a dinner and a bed, would fall in love with me—but never mind, sit down, father John—here by me, and tell us some news."

"I beg your pardon, Miss, for a minute, I have something to say to your papa;" and so saying, he crept round the table to Mr. Wilmot, and made some observation in a low voice, to which the other replied:

"Certainly—beg of him by all means to walk in—why did you not bring him in at once, father John?"

"I was delicate of taking a liberty, Mr. Wilmot, Sir," replied he, looking at lady Anne, from whose mind he desired to efface, by his present respectful demeanour, the somewhat unfavourable impression made by his brother's conduct in the best room.

"I'll go myself;" said Wilmot, starting up, he suddenly stopped short, however, and whispered to the priest, "you are sure he isn't one of those fellows with papers?"

"Ah, not at all, sir—he's a gentleman from England—an elegant fellow as ever I'd wish to see, and mighty agreeable."

"Who are you talking about?" inquired Maria, pricking up her ears, at the words "gentleman from England—elegant fellow, &c."

Lady Anne's sense of hearing, equally acute as that of her daughter's, was roused by the same gratifying sounds, and inquired with pleasing alacrity—

"What is the matter, my love? Is there any one coming, Mr. Molloy?"

Both the persons addressed had, however, disappeared before her question had reached their ears. Meantime, the party, with the exception of Lady Anne and Maria, proceeded in their agreeable occupations, and waited patiently until time should unravel the mystery, if mystery there were. But Miss Wilmot and her mother sat on thorns, during the few seconds of Mr. Wilmot's absence; and their satisfaction may be imagined, but

certainly not described, at seeing him return, accompanied by a fair, and rather good-looking and gentlemanlike young man.

"This gentleman," said Mr. Wilmot, ushering him in, "was found by father John, upset by a drunken driver, about ten miles off—the man had quite lost his way—so Mr. Molloy very properly became his guide and conducted him here. Lady Anne, and my daughters, as well as myself, will do all in our power," he added, smiling, "to induce you to forgive our bad roads and worse drivers."

During the progress of this speech, bows and smiles on both sides had been exchanged, and the traveller had accepted the proffered seat near Maria.

"God bless me! can that be you, Mr. Barham?" exclaimed Mr. McAlpine, "I had not the *laste* idea it was you—how d'ye do? I'm very glad to see you at last—Wilmot, this is the gentleman I told you I had been expecting."

"Really—who could have thought it? is it possible? how very odd!" &c., &c., ran from mouth to mouth, as is usual on such occasions as the present.

"I am afraid you are very much fatigued;" observed lady Anne, in the soft accents habitual to her when addressing the young of the other sex.

"Oh no! I am much obliged to you, not in the least;" replied Mr. Barham, "quite delighted, I assure you—I think it capital fun, being overturned in a bog-hole—I like it of all things—'tis quite an adventure, you know, and so Irish, like what one sees in a play, you know—never would happen one in England, if one was travelling for ever."

"Then you have never been in Ireland before, I suppose?" observed Maria.

"Never; and I'm so glad I've come!"

"You like it then?

"Oh yes, of all things—never laughed so much in all my life as since I have been in Ireland. To-day, I thought I should have died I laughed so, when I was thrown out of the carriage —it was capital! there was the driver in such a fright, you know, for fear I was killed, and when he found I wasn't a bit hurt, he got afraid I'd complain of him to his master; and began cursing his horses, and swearing 'twas their fault, and not his; and then he tried to get me up, and couldn't, he was so drunk—then he fell over me, and neither of us could stir, I was laughing so, and he was so drunk; and there we should have lain all night I suppose, only your friend Mr. Molly was kind enough to bring me here.

"Very happy to have had the pleasure of seeing you," replied Maria, in her usual good-natured tone—"He seems a sad fool, poor young man," thought she. "I wonder, is he rich?" Her thoughts upon this point were, in the course of the evening, most satisfactorily terminated by a scrap of dialogue she overheard between him and the Viscount.

"Pray, may I ask," said Lord Warringdon, "are you one of the Barhams of Leicestershire?"

"To be sure I am; Barham of Cralcourt, myself: you know the Cralcourt hounds?"

"Famous all over England," rejoined Lord Warringdon. "So, you are Barham of Cralcourt; your father used to be greatly on the turf. Has he many horses running now?"

"No, I don't think he has," returned the other, laughing, "unless he has found some in Heaven—he has been dead these two years."

"Happy fellow," observed Lord Warringdon, "your own master—'the world before you where to choose' like our first parents."

"Not my own master yet—I'm not to be of age for a year-and-a-half, you know; and I have got such a tiresome old fellow for a guardian; keeps me so tight, you can't think; Sir Willoughby Turner of Mandeville Park; lives near Melton, you know; I can't bear him—he has got three such ugly daughters, you can't think."

Maria, who had edged her chair close to Mr. Barham's, on the discovery that he was a rich minor (the Cralcourt estate was eighteen thousand per annum), here joined the conversation.

"Do you mean," she asked, laughing, "that your guardian's having three ugly daughters is the original cause, or only an additional one, for not liking him? Poor man; you should pity, rather than dislike him for that."

"Well, so I do; I pity him very much, I'm sure; and them, too, poor girls; for I'm sure they will never get married—unless Sir Willoughby gets people to marry 'em, the way he wanted me; but there was no reason I should, when I didn't like it, was there?"

"No, indeed," replied Maria, as frankly as if she was in no way concerned, in a question which touched ugly girls, who wanted to find husbands. But, indeed, never, on similar occasions, did she betray anything like *esprit de corps;* she could laugh as heartily at a jest against plain women, or husband-hunting ones, as if she were a beauty, and had refused half her

male acquaintances. Who, then, could suspect the plain, but good-humoured, laughing, Maria Wilmot, of being dangerous or designing? Certainly not Mr. Barham of Cralcourt, whom, from this hour, she marked as her victim. Encouraged by her approbation of the exertion of free-will he had evinced, with respect to marrying either of the Miss Turners, he proceeded with his confidential communications thus:

"So when I found he wanted me to marry Ellen Turner, whether I would or no—I cut and ran."

"You were quite right," observed Maria, "I like to see young men have proper spirit."

"I told him, you know, I was going to Paris; and he began to give me such a lot of advice about *rouge et noir*, and to keep out of mischief, and all that sort of thing; so I promised I would; and he asked me how long I should stay, and I said about three months; so I should not be in the least surprised if they were all by this time in Paris, after me; and wondering why they can't find me."

"So you did not go to Paris, after all?"

"Lord bless you, no; I guessed they would be after me, so I came here; they will be so surprised when they hear I'm in Ireland; don't you think they will?"

"Capital!" exclaimed Maria, laughing, (she could laugh, as other women cry or faint, whenever she chose)—"Capital; I give you credit for that idea."

"But the best of it is, they can't hear a word of it, for a long while, for nobody knows where I am gone, I kept it such a secret! I did not even bring a servant with me, for fear he might tell—just for a lark, you know. I was determined to have some fun by myself at least—wasn't I right?"

Maria here burst into one of her best fits of laughing, partly natural, partly affected, to please Mr. Barham's un-aristocratic laughter-loving propensities.

"What are you laughing at? do tell me, Miss Wilmot," laughing already himself, from sympathy.

"Why, I was thinking, Mr. Barham, that your friends will be sure to look for you, every day, at the *Morgue!*"

"The *Morgue!*" repeated he, nearly screaming with delight—"Oh! so they will, I'm positive!—I never thought of that—how good! Oh! what capital fun!"—and he almost fell off his chair in a convulsion of glee, at Maria's happy idea. "Oh, Miss Wilmot, you will kill me," continued he, when sufficiently recovered from his transport to articulate intelligibly—"Hang me if I have done anything but laugh, laugh, ever since I ar-

rived in Ireland! I never saw such a place for fun in my life. I wonder Irish people ever leave Ireland; they never can laugh half so much any where else. I should like so to be an Irishman! Oh! Miss Wilmot, Mr. Molly told me such a droll story, coming along, about somebody playing him a trick at a funeral; I don't exactly recollect what it was, though. I wish you would ask him to tell it over again, will you? I should be so much obliged to you."

Maria was very well disposed to call in the assistance of so faithful an ally as Father John, to aid her virtuous exertions in the task of entertaining their new guest.

"Father John, I want you—here's a petitioner for one of your good stories."

"What good story, Miss Maria?" inquired Father John, quite surprised to find he was considered a teller of good stories.

"Oh! the one about the funeral, Mr. Molloy, if you please," said Mr. Barham.

"The one about the funeral," repeated Father John, slowly and musingly; "upon my word and credit, Mr. Barham, it fails me to remember what story you mane about a funeral. Can't you recollect some of the perticklars?"

"Somebody you thought was dying, and who was not."

"Oh! I remember now—Dan Murphy—But that's no story at all, Mr. Barham, but the blessed truth, I'm sorry to say; not but that I laugh sometimes myself, when I think how I was nicked out of my corpse;" and the good-humoured priest again laughed heartily at the recollection.

"Oh, it is all so good, Mr. Molloy; pray tell it again, will you?"

Lord Warringdon here joined the group, and added his solicitations to those of Mr. Barham, for the "funny corpse-story," though not, by many degrees, so great an *amateur* of fun as his Leicestershire compatriot. Lord Warringdon had sufficiently benefited by Irish air to be able to listen, with tolerable satisfaction, to an Irish anecdote; besides, he was canvassing the county, and, of course, the priests.

"Pray, my dear sir, oblige us," he said.

"With all the pleasure in life, my lord. Most happy to contribute to your entertainment, gentlemen. But, upon my word, I'm afraid you'll be mighty disappointed, if you expect any great amusement, for 'tis nothing but just what happened to myself and Father Costelloe: that's my shuperior in the parish, the parish priest, you know."

"I thought," interrupted Mr. Barham, "you were the parish priest, yourself."

"I wish to the Lord I was," rejoined Mr. Molloy: "no, God help me! I'm only the coadjutor,—the curate you know," observing that his English auditors did not understand the term. "Well, myself, and Father Costelloe, and Mrs. Priest,—that's the priest's niece-in-law, married to one Costelloe, that keeps a public house hard by Father Costelloe's,—we call her Mrs. Priest because there are so many Costelloes in the place, we'd never know which was which, if we did not call her by some name that wasn't her own; well, they and I were talking of one thing or other, one night, over our punch, when, all of a sudden, there comes the sorrows of a sassarara at the door; the Lord save us, says I; who have we got here? 'Who has the assurance and impertinence to come to my door at this unseesonable hour of the night?' cries Father Costelloe, spaking in his fine English manner. (Take care, God bless you, Miss Maria, and don't tell him I say so). 'For one farthing,' says he, 'I'd *keen* the fellow, (cane, he meant) 'whoever he is, for his impudence.' I forgot to say it was Shrove-Tuesday, of all the days in the year. How do you know, Mr. Costelloe?' says I; (he thinks it grand to be called Mr.) how do you know says I, but it might be a crature coming to get married, smart out of hand, afore lent. 'Mr. Molloy,' says he, drawing himself up the way he does when he wants to be mighty grand entirely (you know, Miss Maria?); 'I would not choose, for the best wedding in my parish, nor the best funeral, either, to be disturbed at my repasts.' How comical you are, thinks I: any way, it wouldn't be you that would get the ra'al disturbance, God help me! there isn't a man in the parish, gentlemen," said he, turning to his auditors, "that earns his victuals harder than myself;—rain, snow, or hail, at cock crow, or pitch dark, away I am, tramping the bogs and mountains, while other people, that gets the two shares and more of the dues, are lying snug in their beds, or sitting over their warm fire and comfortable tumbler. But, what can't be cured must be endured,—no use fretting; grief killed the cat, we're told, so, I'll finish my story. May be, says I, it might be a crature that isn't *expected*."

"Somebody dying," said Maria to the gentlemen, "not *expected to live*."

"Do you think, says he, I would suffer myself to be disturbed, at this hour, by the best corpse in my parish? Well, in the middle of this, in walks Mrs. Priest: I forgot to say, she had slipped out of the room, half an hour before, but I never per-

ceived it, 'Guess the news, gentlemen,' says she, seeming mighty plased. 'My grandmother! says I.' 'No, ra'al good news,' says she; 'Dan Murphy won't pass the night.' 'Don't bother us,' says I; 'sure he's always dying, and a sorrow a one of him is dead yet,—God forgive me for cursing,' says I. 'Well, he's dying now in ra'al earnest.' 'How do you know?' says I. 'Wasn't his son here, a minute ago, tearing the house down, like mad?' 'And where is he now?' says I; 'till I spake to him.'—'You can't spake to him now,' says she, 'for he's gone up to the castle, to spake to Pat Murphy, his cousin, to tell him all about it, that he may be ready to attend the funeral, and bring what's wanting, you know;' looking mighty knowing at me. 'Arrah! no: it's joking, you are, Mrs. Priest,' says I; for she's always at her thricks and schames, making fools of Father Costelloe and myself, telling us this one is going to be married, and that one expected, so I'm always on my guard with her; but this turn she spoke so sarious, and looked so plazed, I was thricked entirely, and made sure poor Dan was dying in earnest at last: God knows 'twas time for him, if ever he intended it. But his equal for toughness I never seen: he has had Mrs. Finn, Mrs. Wilson, and the doctor at the dispensary at him, for these five years back, and even they couldn't send him off. Not an Easther came, but we expected our Easther dinner of him,—for his funeral would be the finest in the parish, there's such a dale of Murphys in it, and so well off as they are! the snuggest men to be seen in the province. But what made me give in to the joke, entirely, was the hurry Father Costolloe was in to get me off,—he wouldn't give me time to finish my tumbler, or chat a bit with Mrs. Priest.

"Well, it was pitch-dark,—raining cats and dogs, and the wind blowing so, you'd think 'twas ould Nick cooling his tay, —such a night I never seen for hardship and contrariness,—my horse and myself coming down every minute. Father Costelloe broke the crature's knees the last time he dined here; and 'tisn't the first horse he sarved so, and no wonder, poor man, he grows so corpulent! Well, at last I come to my journey's end. When I got to the poor man's door, I put on a mighty grave face,—you'd think my life was bound up in poor Pat Murphy's: not but I was ra'ally sorry for the crature, now that I thought he was dying in earnest, and that all would be soon over with him.

"I fastened my horse to the latch of the door: 'God save all here,' says I. "*Cead mille faltha*," says Kutty, Dan's wife, smiling, and looking mighty plased. 'Them women,' thinks

I to myself, 'are the dickens, sure enough! see, now, how well plased Kutty is, and her husband, who was always a good one to her, going from her, the crature!'—'Is he sinsible, Kutty,' says I. 'Sinsible! Father John? to be sure he is; why wouldn't he? he's not bad enough for that, yet.' Ah, then, how much worse would you have him, Kutty,' says I, 'if you wouldn't have him dead intirely;—can he spake, Kutty?' says I. 'Ah, then, why wouldn't he spake, Father John?' says she. Myself couldn't make head or tail of her, 'so,' says I, 'bring me to him, Kutty, says I, and then I'll see myself how he is.' 'God bless your reverence, 'tis you that are fond of him, sure enough,' says she, 'to come all the ways this blessed night to see him; I'll sind for him, Father John,' says she. 'Send for him!' says I, 'what in the world do you mane, woman?' says I. 'I'll send for him to Derrymanagoslogh, I mane, Father John,' says she. 'It's a wonder he wouldn't rather die in his own house,' says I. 'So he would, if it was dying he was,' says she. 'Why, what else is he doing, then?' says I. 'Smoking and drinking, like the rest of the company, I b'lieve,' says she. 'What company are you talking of, at all, woman?' says I. 'Ah, sure, he's gone to the lower parish, beyant, to a dragging home of a daughther of a first cousin of his sisther's husband, that's married to a dacent boy, a cousin of his own.' 'Murder alive!' says I to myself, 'and all the slavery I got driving like mad through the bogs, and my elegant tumbler of punch left cooling!' Well, I thought it did no good to be cross to poor Kutty, because her husband wasn't dying just to convanience me and Father Costelloe; so I put the best face I could upon the matter, and so I said I was mighty happy to find Dan was so much better, and off I set home."

"Oh! just tell me, before you go any farther, what you mean by a dragging home," interrupted Mr. Barham.

"A dragging home, you know, is the same as a hauling home," returned Father John.

"Yes, but I don't know what that means either," replied the young Englishman.

"Well, then, I'll tell you what it manes:—a dragging home, or hauling home, is when a girl of one parish is married to a boy of another, and that 'tis too far for the young man's people to come to go to the wedding; when she comes home to her husband's friends, they have another wedding, equal to the first, and that's what they call a dragging home."

"Thank you, for your explanation," said Lord Warringdon, "and now let us hear the sequel of your amusing adventure."

"You're extremely polite, my lord; but, indeed, I'm afraid I'm tiring you, and the rest of the company, with such a long rigmarole, about nothing at all."

"Oh, no," exclaimed Mr. Barham, eagerly; "I'm sure every body must like to hear it, 'tis so funny, isn't it, Miss Wilmot? Now wouldn't you all like to hear the rest of it?" appealing to the company at large.

Mr. McAlpine replied to the question by a look of the most ineffable contempt. He deemed laughing one of the seven deadly sins against Romanus and gentility, his two favourite divinities: and, as he never felt inclined to indulge in it himself, affirmed that no one who had either head or heart ever did.

"What a soulless creature that Barham must be to laugh as he does; don't you think so, my fair enchantress," said he, still staring and looking tender at his victim, poor Isabel.

"It is very happy for him to be able to laugh," she answered, half crying from vexation.

"Come, come,—the story, the story—you like it, don't you, Lady Anne?" cried Barham.

Lady Anne, from politeness, and Mr. Wilmot, from good-nature, always seemed to enjoy what amused others; they had, therefore, listened as attentively to Father John's adventure as if they had not heard it a dozen times before; and now placidly awaited its conclusion.

Father John proceeded thus:—"All the way coming back, I was thinking how I'd be even with Mrs. Priest for the thrick she played me. The next morning, before I got up, a message from her to me, begging me to come and have a *collation* after mass, with herself and Father Costelloe.—She always gets share of his breakfast, for she'd go to the dickens for tay; God forgive her, poor woman; I guessed well enough the rason of her civility—'twas just to see how crest-fallen I'd look, after my fine jaunt for nothing; but I nicked her, as you'll see. —'How are you, Father John?' says she.—'Very well, thank you, ma'am,' says I. 'How did you lave poor Dan,' says she, putting a comical face on herself. 'I didn't see him at all,' says I. 'How's that?' says she. 'Because I wouldn't be let,' says I. 'How do you mane you wouldn't be let?' says she. 'Only just because Mrs. Wilson and the ministher were within-side, reading to him, out of a thract,' says I. 'Reading to him out of a thract,' says she; 'the Lord save us from all harm!' making the sign of the cross. 'Reading to him! out of a thract!' cried Father Costelloe, who just then come down stairs from his devotions. 'The apostate! he deserves to be

cursed from the altar!'—his face was all manner of colours, and swelled up the bigness of his body a'most. 'Och, then,' says I, 'you may keep your breath to cool your porridge, Mr. Costelloe; for if you were cursing him from Sunday morning till Saturday night, he wouldn't care a pinch of snuff about yourself or your curses.' 'The bastely turncoat,' said Mrs. Priest, pouring out a cup of elegant strong tay for herself. 'Not care about me nor my curses!' cries Father Costelloe, mightily displeased. 'I request, sir, 'you'll spake more respectfully when you address your superior.' 'How will ye have me spake respectful, when I'm spaking the way Protestants spake?' 'You were spaking of one of my flock, sir; you don't call them Protestants, I suppose,' says he, as mad as could be. 'Not all of 'em—only Dan Murphy; he's as black a new light as Mrs. Wilson, or the minister himself, by this time,' says I. 'I don't b'lieve any such thing,' says he. 'Oh very well, Mr. Costelloe, you needn't if you don't like.' So I said no more, but sat down to my collation. I was mightily fitagued after my duties that morning; but Father Costelloe was too mad to ate a bit. 'Pray what rasons did the turncoat give for his apostacy?' 'I wasn't let see him at all,' says I; 'but his wife tould me he turned partly because he liked the Protestants, and partly to spite us.' 'Spite *us!* What does that mean? He must mean to spite you, Mr. Molloy—You've been negligent of your duty, sir.' 'Faith, I haven't, Mr. Costelloe; and 'tisn't me he means, but yourself, that's to say, Mrs. Priest.' 'Me!' says she, trembling, and turning as white as a sheet, for she's greatly in dread of displasing Father Costelloe, and no blame to her: 'What have I to do with a villian of his kind turning Protestant?' 'I don't know,' said I, 'whether he tells thruth or no, but the rason he gives is that you refused a gon of his liquor, on score; and himself and his son swore, by this and that, they'd be revenged on you and Father Costelloe, and cheat you out of his funeral.' 'You unfortunate woman!' said Father Costelloe, looking at her as if she would ate her up alive—and she shaking like a lafe. 'Oh! Father Costelloe, dear,' says she, 'forgive me this once. Oh! for the sake of ——————' 'Go! this minute and ask Dan Murphy's pardon, and his son's, and tell 'em they're welcome to every dhrop of liquor in your house, whether they pay for it or not.' If you seen the wry face she made, for she's the greatest skin-flint, and the proudest and most concated woman in the parish, in regard of being married to the priest's nephew. 'Why don't you go at once?' says Father Costelloe. 'I'm waiting sir,'

says she, mighty mild, 'just to finish my drop of tay.' 'Your tay, woman,' says he, bouncing off his chair as if he was shot; 'if you don't go this minute, bit nor sup, tay, nor mate, shall you ever have in my house. What's a drop of ditch-water of its kind, compared to my losing the best funeral in the parish, to say nothing of the poor man's soul, and all by your own fault?' So, away she went, laving her tay after her, and starving with the hunger, all the way to Dan Murphy's, on a pillion; and had to hire a man to sit before her, which vexed her well, I promise you. Nothing could equal the surprise of the Murphys when she began *pullalooing*, and crying *peccavi* for not giving them tick, and offering them everything in her house for nothing. But when she began talking of Mrs. Wilson and the minister, they thought her going mad entirely; and when the murder came out, at last, back she came to us, fit to be tied, mad, outrageous. 'What made you,' says she, 'have the assurance to make a fool of me, Misthress Priest?' 'One good turn deserves another.' 'I'll tell Father Costelloe of you,' says she. '*I'll* tell Father Costelloe of *you*,' says I; so there then it ended; and there ends my story—gentlemen and ladies, and I'm much indebted to you for your plasing attention."

"It is rather we who are indebted to you, sir," politely observed Lord Warringdon, "I assure you I have been much amused."

"Raally," observed McAlpine, to Isabel, "he ought to be ashamed to say so; a man of Lord Warringdon's habits and education should be suparior to finding amusement in the conversation of a man of no mind; he can have no mind himself."

"I beg your pardon, you happen to be mistaken, twice in a breath;" replied Isabel, sharply, "father John has a strong brogue; but he has mind too; and as to Lord Warringdon, he has taste, as well as mind."

"Oh, I believe I must allow him to have taste; for on one point, at laste, we agree—that of admiring the same lady—but, now, with respect to the other quaalification; a great dale depends upon what would be our different definitions of a man of mind; what would you define a man of mind to be?"

"Oh! I'm a bad hand at definitions:" answered Isabel, carelessly.

"What a libel on your own intellectual powers!" cried Mr. McAlpine, "you that shine aqually in the flowery fields of the imagination, or the sublime heights of the understanding. Come now; you must not be afraid of me; and you must have a little more confidence in yourself;" he continued, tenderly en-

ıg her supposed timidity—"Come, fair Isabel, I'm
for your definition."
efinition of what?" inquired Lord Warringdon, who,
irst time that evening, found an opportunity of seating
near Isabel. He had more than once previously en-
ed to make his way to her, but had been constantly in-
d *en route* by Lady Anne, who always contrived, just
ı occasions, to have something particular to say to him;
l not imagine how it all happened.
ur readers more sagacious than his Lordship? But,
ned as he was, in all things, great or small, to have his
y, opposition, however unintentional, or accidental, ir-
ıis impatience, and confirmed into determinate will what
ınally been, perhaps, but a caprice. Each time, there-
ıt Lady Anne (even though but accidentally as he sup-
had intercepted him, he grew but still more resolved to
lish his aim of the moment; in the meanwhile, he
at Isabel the oftener, because he could not at once make
ır; and thus noticed in her something of interest, which
se must have escaped him. He remarked her listless,
ıpied air; he remarked that she never voluntarily ad-
her companion, and that when obliged, from politeness,
to his observations, her eyes were directed to the floor,
e ceiling, or to father John, or to Mr. Barham; to any,
r point, nay, fittingly to himself, in fact, rather than to
ı of the person who was addressing her; and now the
t's curiosity became augmented anew, and he watched
ntively.
s evident that Isabel desired to be free of her compan-
e did not, however, pout or toss her head, in manifesta-
ıer feelings; an occasional contraction of her expressive
one betrayed her impatience of the constraint imposed
r; indicating even vexation, only just so far as became one
nind was as polished as her manners. For the first time
Varringdon looked with interest upon an unmarried wo-
ho was not an heiress. He had seen Isabel much more
t in beauty than upon that evening; but he had never
to be so loveable; even those who have no feeling
lves are touched by an unconscious, delicate show of it
:s, particularly when, as in the present case, the abstract
is illustrated by a pretty face. No; never had he
; her eye-lashes so long and so dark as now, when he
ɜm almost reflected on a transparent cheek, pale from
ısed emotion. Nor had her light brown hair, which fell

in rich natural clusters about her face and neck, ever appeared to him so luxuriant and beautiful as at present, when it shaded a countenance no longer lighted up by vivacity, and, (the better part of beauty,) the expression of a quick succession of thought—but breathing a gentle and unobtrusive pensiveness.

"What a pity," thought he, "to throw away so graceful a creature upon that brute!"

The look of delighted surprise with which Isabel started from her dull inertion, at the sound of his voice, when he came up, and asked, as has been mentioned—"A definition of what?" and the radiant smile with which she welcomed him, were not lost upon so acute an observer of female nature as Lord Warringdon.

"Her cheek is not pale now," thought he, "nor does she turn away her eyes when she looks at *me*. Her look is, indeed, timid, but not avoiding."

Isabel felt that the words of his question were nothing—but its tone much. Isabel felt this, and her face beamed with joy and intelligence.

"The statue of Pygmalion," thought he, "warmed into life!"

But Isabel answered his question. "Mr. McAlpine insists on my defining a man of mind; the idea of asking a woman for a definition! to require us to imprison our vague, fleeting, impalpable, and often as men say, irrational impressions, and imaginings within the limit of a cold, precise, philosophical rule. I appeal to you, now, is it not unfair?"

"Mr. McAlpine, don't let her off," said Lord Warringdon, "a definition from her would be *impayable*—there would be such sweet—"

"Confusion! you were going to say," interrupted Isabel, laughing—"so I'll save you the confusion of finishing a sentence so courageously begun."

"No!" said he, "such sweet freshness and feeling, and—"

"Nonsense—" again interrupted Isabel. "But it is quite true, you must never expect anything precise, or raisonné, in our ideas. We are nothing but 'a bundle of sympathies,' you know, creatures who never think according to reason, but according to feeling: in one word, women think with their hearts."

"They could not think with anything half so good," rejoined Lord Warringdon—"*allons commençez.*"

Isabel laughed again, and shook her head. Mr. McAlpine was inexpressibly gratified at the change that had taken place

in her manner, since Lord Warringdon had interrupted their tête à tête.

"She feels more at ease now, that she's no longer alone with me. How soon one can see when a woman raally loves—the very manes she takes to conceal her passion betrays it—come now," said he, in a tone half-tender, half-playful—"come, I insist on your definition; I'll not take the laste excuse."

Just at this moment, very much to Mr. McAlpine's annoyance, Maria joined the group—she had committed Mr. Barham to the safe guardianship of father John, her zealous ally on all occasions, and her indefatigable *proneur*; being, therefore, relieved, for a season at least, from such close application to her own interests, she was willing to dispose of a few moments' leisure to her sister's advantage.

"I wish," thought she, "that McAlpine would take himself off, and leave Warringdon and Isabel together;" and, aware of McAlpine's refined antipathy to the love of jesting, and ridicule of sentiment, she judged that her own presence would most effectually secure his departure.

"Well, good people," said she, "what high and weighty matters are you discussing here? Isabel, I see, is picking her glove to pieces, so I conclude she's the umpire chosen to decide on the contending opinions of Great Britain and Ireland. Now, my advice to you is, to say out at once, boldly, yes, or no, whatever may be the point at issue. Better to offend either or both, (your pardon, gentlemen,) than spoil a pair of Paris gloves."

"Your tariff of our worth is certainly highly flattering;" observed Lord Warringdon, smilingly.

"Oh! I don't profess to be polite:" replied Maria, "you must know I'm odd, and odd people are never expected to be civil; and you can't think what a comfort that is. But come! what's the subject of your contestation? Let us see if I can't settle it, as fairly and more fearlessly than Isabel. Love, politics, religion, or literature? under which of these four grand divisions of squabbling have you ranged yourselves for battle, heroes of white Albion and green Erin?"

"Our conversation has nothing to do with any of the topics you have enumerated; neither was it a dispute, but a discussion;" observed McAlpine, annoyed at Maria's jesting manner of treating all his favourite subjects: "your sister is going to oblige me (if you'll allow her to speak,) with her idaas of a man of mind."

"Well, Isabel—proceed, I entreat—I'm all attention;" said

Maria, assuming an attitude of mock-gravity, which enraged McAlpine, but made Lord Warringdon laugh. "Come, Isabel," she ran on, perceiving that her sister still remained silent, "enlighten us with your wisdom."

"Nonsense, Maria," said Isabel; "I have already told these gentlemen that I never could define anything; and I'm quite tired of having to repeat the same thing so often."

"So you won't oblige me!" murmured McAlpine, in a tone of tender reproach.

"I did not think," observed Lord Warringdon, "you were so unpersuadable."

"What stupid creatures men are," resumed Maria; "you never can guess a woman's real motive for doing, or not doing, any one given thing. Here's my poor, guileless, innocent sister, accused of disobligingness by one gentleman, and of unpersuadableness by another, two most cruel and undeserved charges; for she is dying to oblige the one, and could be persuaded to anything by the other; while the motive for her silence is simply this: she fears that her description of what she imagines to be an interesting man may not sufficiently appear a fancy portrait; and that, therefore, one or the other of you may think he discerns his own features in the *beau ideal* sketch of her imagination."

"I do wish," said Isabel, blushing very deeply and looking extremely offended; "I do wish, Maria, you would not speak as you do, without thinking; Mr. McAlpine, of course, knows you are only jesting; but Lord Warringdon will really think that—" she stopped abruptly, aware how ill-judged was any comment on Maria's speech, and how much consciousness of its truth her very anxiety betrayed. Maria, who never talked at random, had contemplated this very result; and, having attained it, and attracted Lord Warringdon's attention, she now stepped into her sister's aid.

"Mr. McAlpine, since Isabel will not oblige you, I will. Now, I define a man of mind to be the man who has a mind for me, and that's what I call a jewel of a definition;" she went on, mimcking father John's intonations.

Isabel and Lord Warringdon laughed, but Mr. McAlpine looked at her with ineffable disgust, as he muttered to himself—

"The idaa of any woman confessing such utter feminine degradation and want of sentiment! She's an abominable creature."—

But though Maria's jest upon so sacred a subject had displeased Mr. McAlpine, it delighted Mr. Barham; who, on

hearing the laugh, came flying across the room to inquire its cause.

"Oh—bravo! oh! how well you do mimic Mr. Molly! 'tis so like;" and he sprang about the room in delight.

"What's that you're all laughing at?" inquired father John.

"Oh! something so droll, but I can't tell *you* what, because you might be cross."

"Not he!" cried Maria; "father John is never cross at anything *I* say or do; are you, father John?"

"Ah, you rogue, I guess well what you're doing; telling some diverting lie of me; but you're welcome," added he, looking kindly at his favourite; "you're welcome, whatever you say."

"He's very near it, isn't he, Miss Wilmot?" asked Mr. Barham; "I'll tell him, shall I? yes I will. Miss Wilmot was giving an imitation of you, Mr. Molly; so like you'd have died yourself to hear her!" and he ran to join the priest.

"I wouldn't doubt her," replied the good-humoured father John; 'tisn't the first time she done it, I'll engage; no, nor it won't be the last time either."

"Did you hear what she said about the man of mind, Mr. Molly?"

"A man of what mind?" inquired father John.

"Oh, not a man of any particular mind—only a man of mind in general, you know."

"Faith, I do not know," said Father John.

Maria perceiving one gentleman could not understand, nor the other explain, took upon herself the office of interpreter. When she had done—

"Ha! ha! ha! upon my word, that's an excellent idea of a man of mind:" praised father John, shaking his plump sides. —"I'll tell you one thing, Miss Maria,—whoever has a mind for you, will show he has sense, at any rate, to choose the pleasantest crature from this to yourself, whoever the others may be; that's what I call a fine, hearty, sinsible young woman:" he continued, turning to Mr. Barham—"one that says out at once whatever comes into her head, without throubling herself what any body thinks of her; and that's the girl for my money! and a pleasant crature; always saying one droll thing or other, enough to make a corpse laugh."

"Well, do you know I thought she was very droll, though I never heard any one say she was reckoned so—I begin to understand Irish humour, I think, though I havn't been long here, yet; but is she as droll as you are, Mr. Molly?"

"Droll as me, is it? Troth she is, and far droller, than ever I will be."

"But has she such nice stories as that about the funeral, Mr. Molly? I wish you'd mention what stories she does tell—will you?"

"I don't remember, upon my word, exactly, at the present moment, any story of hers, in perticklar; but, indeed, I nearly lost my life by a joke of hers, onct."

"Oh, did you?" exclaimed Mr. Barham, in ecstasy:—"do tell me how?"

"I was ating a potaty, hot out of the pot, one day, below in the kitchen, and she came in, I forget for what, now; and she began telling me some quare thing or other, and myself began to laugh; and, troth, the potaty stuck in my throat, and I had liked to be choked; and would never have ate a bit again, I'm sure, only she thumped me between the shoulders, and forced the potaty out of me."

"Oh, how funny!" cried Mr. Barham,—"how I wish I had been there!—I should have so liked to have seen you choking, Mr. Molly."

"I have never seen the aqual of him for idiosy; he can't even call my own name right," muttered father John. "Troth, and if 'twould be the same to you, I'd rather you seen some one else choking."

"Oh! I don't mean, you know, that I should like you to be choked, in earnest; only it must have looked so funny to see you all black in the face, and Miss Wilmot slapping your back! What was it she told you that made you laugh so?"

"I forget, indeed, what it was! 'tis a good while ago, now."

"Well! a story of your own, then, Mr. Molly! Do pray tell me something funny."

"I hav'nt a funny story in the world, Mr. Barham, that I hav'nt told you already."

Poor Mr. Barham looked exceedingly disappointed.

"Well, the same over again!—Will you, Mr. Molly, if you please?"

"Ah! my God! was there ever any poor man so persecuted as I am, and all on account of the bad luck I had to tell him the thrick I played on Mrs. Priest! One would think I had nothing to do, from morning to night, but remembering funny stories to divart him. I wish I was in my bed out of his way. Miss Maria, my honey," cried he, "I want to spake to you a

moment—whisper. This young man is killing me; I can't stand him any longer, my pet."

"Why, what is he doing, Father John?"

"Bothering me to death for funny stories, as he calls them."

"Well; can't you tell him some?"

"What else have I been doing all night? but, any how, I can't stop now, for I have to read my office before I go to bed, you know; and it's getting late; so God bless you;" and father John stole quietly out of the room, to the great discomfiture of Mr. Barham:—Maria, the only person of the party who could supply the place of Father John, being engaged talking with Mr. McAlpine, Lord Warringdon, and her sister. —Aware, in fact, of McAlpine's horror of anything savouring of a jest on any subject, but more especially on one of a poetical kind, she had sent back Mr. Barham to Father John's charge, on a quest for "funny stories," and indulged herself in allusions to them, purely for the purpose of scaring away Mr. McAlpine, and leaving Lord Warringdon and her sister tête à tête. But this was the more difficult to accomplish, as Mr. McAlpine had never been so pleasingly impressed with the "idaa of Isabel's attachment," as upon that evening. —"Her constrained and timid manner when alone with me—her gaiety and animation when Warringdon joined us—her charming reluctance to define a man of mind, for fear I should penetrate her sacret, and who it was that raalized her romantic idaa of perfection; and then, her sweet agitation at her sister's indelicate allusion to the raal motive for her refusing to oblige me;—everything conspires to give me the delightful assurance that I am fondly, tenderly, and devotedly beloved by this fascinating cratur."—Such was the tenor of Mr. McAlpine's cogitation, as he arose to effec this escape from the coarseness and vulgarity of Maria's conversation.

"I am going to lave you for a moment," he said to Isabel; and, accompanying this announcement, at once afflicting and consolatory (inasmuch as the intimation of his departure was softened by the assurance of his speedy return,) by a look of mingled triumph and tenderness, at the one sister, and of unmingled and unmeasured abhorrence at the other—he dragged his lazy length across the room, and seated himself near Lady Anne, who welcomed him with one of her most seducing smiles, in which Mr. McAlpine read delight at his attention to her daughter, and a strong though vain effort to conceal that delight. Isabel and Lord Warringdon also caught this expres-

sion of Lady Anne's countenance, and discerned another feeling mingled with it;—namely, displeasure towards Lord Warringdon, for having, by his *gaucherie*, interrupted the more than probable termination of Mr. McAlpine's assiduities, that evening; and also against her daughter, for having preferred a flirtation with one gentleman, to a declaration from the other. And now, for the first time in his life, Lord Warringdon beheld a mother angry, and a daughter frightened, at his assiduities;—for Isabel grew pale and constrained as she had previously done, when talking with, or rather when talked to, by McAlpine, although the Viscount felt that the same cause did not now produce the similar effect. The conversation, hitherto, so flowing and animated, became broken and spiritless.

"Your Father and I," he observed, after a pause of some seconds, "are going to ride to-morrow to a Mr. Molony's, who has votes—Will you come?"

"Maria will, I dare say."

"That is truly an Irish answer," he said, laughing. "I did not ask whether Maria would, but whether *you* would—No diplomatic subterfuges will avail you with me, however. I demand an honest answer;—Yes—or No—"

"No"—replied Isabel, laughing—but Lord Warringdon perceived that her laugh was affected, and also divined that, although she said the No, so courageously, her heart sunk because she dared not say—Yes.

"I thought you liked riding?" looking disappointed at her refusal.

"So I do," said she, trying to seem perfectly indifferent.

"It must be, then, that you don't like your proposed companions; which of them is the obnoxious person? Mr. Wilmot or myself?"

A slight tremour of her voice did not escape him, as she answered with affected carelessness,—"Neither one nor the other; my only motive for declining your invitation is, that it will not be in my power to accept it."

"So you won't come and *help* me, as you have done heretofore, to win the hearts of the men of ——? But I am quite in the black-book, I see; you'll neither speak to me, nor look at me, ever since the arrival of your mama's friend, the adoring, adorable, and, doubtless, adored, Mr. McAlpine."

Isabel darted a look of indignant surprise at him, and, rising abruptly, left the room. In her look he read something more than astonishment, or even displeasure, something that expressed, as distinctly as if she had given utterance to the feeling—

"You are ungenerous in saying this; for you not only know perfectly well that I abominate McAlpine, but you also are aware that I like yourself."

Lord Warringdon dreamt that night that he was in love with Isabel Wilmot, and when he awoke, he did not laugh at his dream.

"If she had a hundred or even fifty thousand pounds," thought he—*If* is a great peace-maker in love as well as war.—When a man or woman comes to an if, there are hopes or fears, as the case may be, that all is not sound "in the state of Denmark."

CHAPTER VIII.

After breakfast next morning, Mr. Barham set off grouse shooting, escorted by Pat Murphy; and Mr. McAlpine remained at home to talk sentiment and read Lord Byron to Isabel; Mr. Wilmot and Lord Warringdon were just mounting their horses on their canvassing expedition; and Isabel was standing at the window, ostensibly to admire her father's Arab, which was prancing and curvetting with all the vanity of conscious beauty, never suspecting that part, at least, of the admiration he excited was owing to the chance of his having that day for his rider his master's guest rather than his master himself.

Lord Warringdon looked up at the window, and smiled when he saw Isabel; "Wish me success," cried he, as he kissed his hand and rode off.

"Come away from the window, my dear!" said Lady Anne. "Lord Warringdon can mount his horse, I suppose, without your superintendence. I must say I never saw such conduct in any young woman, circumstanced as you are;—engaged, I may say, to one man, and yet carrying on a flirtation with another. I really have not patience with such want of sense, and want of honour. I have not the slightest doubt that McAlpine would have proposed for you last night, had you behaved with common decency; but just as he was making up his mind to speak, you set on foot a trashy conversation with Lord Warringdon, who has no more serious intentions about you than he has about me; he is just laughing at you,—*that* you may rely upon. Maria," said she, turning to her other daughter, "I shall be

obliged by your talking to your sister on this business; perhaps you may have more influence on her than I have;" and so saying, she quitted the room with an air of displeasure.

"I am a miserable creature," exclaimed Isabel.

"Because mamma won't let you look out of the window, at Lord Warringdon?" asked her sister, laughing.

Isabel coloured. "I care very little about Lord Warringdon, as it happens," said she, in a tone of disdain. "It is not necessary, I suppose, to be in love with him in order to be miserable at the thought of being forced to marry McAlpine. Maria, if you knew how I loathe this horrid McAlpine, I am sure you would pity me,—even mamma would. I will tell her that I really cannot marry him; shall I, Maria?"

"Why, as for that, I don't see what use there would be in any such avowal. You know she made poor Louisa marry a man old enough to be her grand-father, and that all Louisa's protestations of disgust were nothing in the balance against fifty thousand per annum and a peerage. The grand object of mamma's life has been, you know, to marry her daughters advantageously. We may break our hearts (such of us as have one) afterwards if we like,—that will not be her fault, but ours; she does her duty, she gets us good matches, and leaves all the rest, like a good christian, to Providence. It would be, therefore, quite useless to tell her that you dislike McAlpine; she knows already that you do. To avoid marrying him, you must marry somebody else; that is your only chance of escape."

"Heaven help me! I have none, then," exclaimed Isabel, despairingly.

"Yes, you have," replied Maria, who feared driving her sister to utter desperation. "Yes, you have a chance, and a brilliant one. "I am sure Lord Warringdon admires you; whether he is sufficiently *ésprit* to marry you, is another story. Try what you can effect with him; but take care that mamma shall see nothing of your proceedings, or she would stop you at once, for she fears losing McAlpine and not succeeding with Warringdon. Besides, to tell you the truth, she has taken it into her head that the admiration is rather on your side than his, and that you may make yourself ridiculous, and ———"

"I am really much indebted to her for her flattering estimation of me," interrupted Isabel, highly affronted; "I am not quite mean enough to fall in love with a man who cares nothing about me, nor silly enough to fancy he does, if he really does not. Maria, too, sees that he admires me," thought she to herself; "my wishes have not, then, quite deceived me, and I have

a hope, not only of escaping McAlpine, but of securing the only man I ever really loved."

Isabel did not give utterance to these thoughts. There never had existed between the sisters that habit of confidence on every subject which forms the chief bond of love between sisters in general. They lived together, indeed, rather on the footing of intimate companions than of trusting and trusted friends; neither of them, however, being deficient in affection for the other. They liked one another better than any other women of their acquaintance; they laughed or reasoned together as the case might be, but they seldom talked. And, perhaps, this constraint was natural between two persons whose ways of thinking were so dissimilar. Isabel, however, we must add, felt more cautious of Maria than Maria of her. Maria would much oftener speak of her "designs," as she called them, than Isabel of her attachments. But although, on the present occasion, Isabel hid her secret thoughts from her sister, Maria, who had a portion of her mother's power of divination, saw what was passing in mind,—saw that her own hint about Lord Warringdon was extremely acceptable, and would be forthwith acted upon. Nor had Isabel ever before thought so highly of Maria's good sense and penetration as she now did. Aware, however, of Maria's objection to "love talk," she changed the subject to one more interesting to her sister.

"What sort of a young man is Mr. Barham?"

"Quite a fool," replied Maria, composedly.

"I wonder, then, Maria, why you should waste your time talking to him."

"I do not waste my time at all; I put it out to the best interest imaginable,—cent. per cent., or rather thousand per cent. He has eighteen thousand a year, and a fine place in Leicestershire."

"Yes, but what is his fine place to us?"

"His fine place is nothing to either of us, at present, I grant you; it never *will* be anything to you, I know, inasmuch as you strike at nobler quarry;—but it will be a great deal, I expect, to me."

"Why, Maria, you surely would not marry that silly boy?"

"Wouldn't I? *naboklish*,* as Father John says; I wish, my dear, I had the refusing of him, if he was twice the fool he is,—a difficult thing, by the bye."

"Dear Maria, how can you, with your strength and variety of intellect, seriously contemplate marrying an idiot?"

* Never mind.

"Isabel," said Maria, for once in her life speaking with emotion, "what has this intellect you talk of effected for me? have not all the pretty fools, or ugly heiresses, who started into life with me, been married before me? Show me the man who marries a woman *because* she has intellect. He may forgive it in a pretty woman,—he certainly will in a rich one,—but she who is neither wealthy nor handsome, and yet possesses it, how does she fare?"

"Why, my dear Maria, I never met a clever man yet who did not say that he preferred your conversation to that of all the women he knew."

"Psha, my dear Isabel, what care I about their preferring my conversation? do they prefer myself? Let us come to the point,—which of them has proposed for me? for, after all, disguise the thing as we please, that is the grand object to which our perfections of any kind, and the admiration they excite, naturally tend. You remember the Frenchman who, whenever he heard of a beautiful poem, or heroic action, used to say, '*Tout cela, depuis le Marechal de France, jusqu'au Saretien, se fait indubitablement pour avoir de quoi mettre dans la bouche, et accomplir les lois de la mastication selon moi, est le vrai resultat des choses les plus rares de ce monde.*' Now, for 'mastication,' read 'marriage,' and the Frenchman's opinions are mine. Does an empty compliment on my talents repay me, think you, for the trouble I have taken in cultivating them? Clever men '*converse*' with me, 'tis true, but they make love to others, and, what is worse, marry them. So that I have long ago seen that mere cleverness would never answer; and, from the moment I became sure of *that*, I began to say and do strange, sometimes startling, things, till I made them call me odd, in London; and till I was followed by all the fools about town, whom my reputation for mere talent had, in the first instance, frightened away. Well, I came home here; and here I play the buffoon, making people, like that poor silly Barham, laugh, in order to produce effect, in any way; so that, if I *do* marry, I shall owe my success, not to my talents, but to my absurdity;—not to my sense, but to my nonsense. No, my dear Isabel, credit me, talent is infinitely in a woman's way. What a pity I was not born a man, and in good stirring times; then I should have made Europe ring with my name; now, all my energies can get me nothing but a husband, and that husband a fool."

"Maria, you deserve a better fate than that," exclaimed Isabel, struck by the energy, misplaced as it was, of her sister's mind; and, suddenly perceiving the secret spring of actions,

and of opinions, which had so often puzzled her, in all her previous examinations of Maria's character.

"Bah!" said Maria, "one fate is as good as another, in the long run; a cloudy morning may change into a bright noon;—it may be very pleasant to be married to a fool, for anything you or I know to the contrary; and, suppose it should not, why, in a hundred years' time it will be all the same to me, whether I had been married to Lord Byron or Mr. Barham; or whether I had set the world in a blaze, like Helen, or Cleopatra; or had been shown about at a fair, as a rival to the pig-faced lady. At the epoch I allude to, Mrs. Barham and Lady Warringdon will look alike," continued she, playfully taking her sister by the chin: "A little courage is all that is necessary for anything: do you not recollect how much easier it was, when we were both children, to persuade me to have a tooth out, than you? you would cry; and mamma would say, 'do, my sweet Isabel; you will be so much prettier, you know, when that ugly tooth is out, and that the others have room to range; and your mouth will be quite spoiled, if you keep it in; indeed it will, my pretty:' but still you cried, and wrung your little hands, in an agony of indecision, as to which of the two appalling misfortunes you would prefer,—the pain of losing a tooth, or the horror of injuring your beauty."

Isabel laughed:—"Oh, yes, I remember all those pangs of mine so well! and you, on the contrary, used to submit, with the greatest apparent composure, to a similar operation."

"Yes, chiefly because I had no beauty to lose; and mamma needed only to remind me of all the inconvenience I had already suffered, from the aching tooth, and inform me of all that was yet in store for me; and how I should be kept awake all night by it, and, consequently, rendered unable to attend to my lessons in the morning; and that, then it was likely my cousin, little Anne Rochford, would get before me. This was enough—I made up my mind at once; for I could have better borne to have every tooth in my head dragged out, than to have let 'my cousin, little Anne Rochford, get before me.' And upon exactly such a principle I have acted through life. When once convinced that a certain object is necessary to my welfare, I aim at that object, steadily, unswervingly—there may be difficulties accompanying its pursuits—unpleasant, nay, painful ones; I disregard them; I overlook the means, and contemplate only the result. And hearken, Isabel. I have applied this principle more especially to my matrimonial speculation. This instant, I would take *anybody* who could make *somebody* of me; for you

know, as well as I do, that a woman who is not married is nobody. I heard my mother say this first: I looked about me, and saw that she was right—and I determined to marry, and become somebody as soon as possible. And my first stroke was for a distinguished marriage—but I was checked somewhat in my aspirations after distinction by overhearing the same lady deplore to my aunt 'how plain poor Maria was, and how sadly difficult it would be to marry her.' Now, upon hearing this awkward fact, a girl of much sensibility, or mind, (as your adoring Mr. McAlpine might say,) would have gone to her room, and cried herself into fits—I acted more wisely. I asked mamma if anything could supply the want of beauty in a girl! 'Yes,' answered she, 'accomplishments, fashion, and above all, knowledge of the world;' well, I worked away, day and night, at the accomplishments; and I studied human character carefully—and shall I tell you what has been the result of this latter branch of my pursuits? dislike and contempt of the men—disgust and contempt of the women."

"With such an opinion of society, I should be indifferent as to the place I was to occupy in it;" observed Isabel.

"Bad! bad logic, Isabel;" rejoined Maria, "ambition, whether its object be the acquisition of an empire, or of a husband, is yet in its nature pretty much the same. Cæsar had not, I dare say, a more favourable opinion of his fellows than I have, yet he spent a life to win a name amongst them. Perhaps this very contempt of your species increases your desire for distinction; for, who can reconcile himself to be nothing in the eyes of those who are already nothing in his? But, to go on with my autobiography. I saw that, to attain my object, I must not boggle at a few disagreeable adjuncts—I determined, therefore, to take the first tolerable match that God might send, and not be particular about a little folly or ugliness—old age or bad temper—I was not fastidious, you will acknowledge; yet, was I successful? I had sense, and I had not beauty—so alas! no one came a wooing to me. Oh, how I have moved heaven and earth to gain even McAlpine."

"Dear Maria," cried Isabel, "I wonder the very thought of him did not make you sick."

"I dare say it might have had that effect, if I had allowed myself to think at all about him, but I thought only on McAlpine castle, and ten thousand a year! a carriage and servants of my own; in fact, of an establishment! And that's the only way to manage on those occasions. Never allow yourself to think of the man at all, only of the fortune. And now, does

not this *exposé* of my present position and future expectations convince you that the distinguished talents you are graciously pleased to attribute to me, my fair sister, have been hitherto, and are likely always to remain, useless ornaments? and, therefore, that it would be the height of folly in me, to object to the folly of Mr. Barham."

Before Isabel had time to reply, the door opened suddenly, and the identical person of whom they were talking bounded into the room.

"Oh! Miss Wilmot, is it true?"

"Is what true?" counter-questioned Maria.

"Is it true that you are going to have a ball?"

"Quite true;" she answered.

"Oh what fun it will be—an Irish ball—how capital;" and he spun about the room like a tetotum. "Pat Murphy told me all about it; but I thought he was only trotting me; and Lady Anne has been so kind as to ask me to stay here as long as I like. McAlpine castle, she tells me, is such a stoopid place—no fun at all going on there—I'm so glad I was overturned on way to it."

"So am I, too;" thought Maria.

"Do you know," continued Mr. Barham, "that I think Mr. McAlpine rather stoopid himself? I never should take him for an Irishman; he never makes one laugh, does he, now? I'm so glad I have come here, instead of going to him—I hope you will have the ball soon—guess how many quadrilles I danced once?"

"Nine;" answered Maria.

"What do you say to twenty-four?" cried he, triumphantly, "and wasn't a bit tired afterwards."

"Bless me! I never heard of such a thing:" said Maria, looking astonished, "I declare I think you must be jesting, Mr. Barham."

"Oh no; quite serious, I assure you, so you see, I shall do capitally in Ireland, shant I? you must know I fancy myself quite an Irishman already. I asked Pat Murphy and Mr. Molly, if they did not think so, and they said they did. Would you believe, that I know all your servants' names already? such funny names! they made me laugh so. When I go back to England, I intend bringing some Irish servants with me, just to make me laugh, and remind me of the pleasant time I am spending here."

"Please God," thought Maria, "you shall take something back, that will still better remind you of "the pleasant time you

are spending here:" she added aloud, "is this the only province of Ireland that you have visited?"

"Oh no, I have been all over it. I have been to the Giant's Causeway, such a funny place as it is—such lots of rocks, and things heaped one over the other—and the lakes of Killarney; I saw them too; I caught some trout in one of them, and broiled them on the arbutus myself—I wouldn't let any body assist me—such fun as I had—I fell into the lake and was nearly drowned, but the guide jumped after me and caught me just as I was sinking, it was very good-natured of him, wasn't it? so I gave him twenty pounds—he deserved that I am sure, and a great deal more for saving me—did he not, Miss Wilmot?"

"Indeed, he did, treble the sum;" responded Maria, with alacrity—"you paid him, however, very generously, I am sure he gave you abundance of blessings."

"Oh yes, such a lot of 'em—he told me I was some King or potentate in disguise; and when I told him I was only an English gentleman, travelling about just for a lark—he said he wished all English gentlemen were like me—and that I was the truth of a gentleman—for I had the purse of an Englishman, and the heart of an Irishman. Wan't that a compliment, Miss Wilmot?"

Before Miss Wilmot had time to answer, he ran on, "You can't imagine how surprised I was when I felt myself in the water. I had not been thinking of anything particular, you know—just sailing about to see the lions of the place; and I got tired looking at them at last; and so leaned back just to take a snooze for a minute or two; when pop, I fell overboard! that was my first adventure on coming to Ireland; and my second was, when I fell into the bog-hole, here—I hope I shall have some more—I wonder what my third will be, what do you think, Miss Wilmot?"

"To be married to me, I hope;" thought Maria.

"Do guess, Miss Wilmot, do;" urged Mr. Barham.

"Perhaps," said Maria, "it may be to fight a duel."

"Oh, do you think so?" he exclaimed eagerly—"I should like that of all things—a duel in Ireland! what capital fun 'twould be! so Irish! I should have such laughing with my chums at King's when I go back to Cambridge, about my Irish duel! they will call me Paddy Barham; don't you think they will, Miss Wilmot?—I hope they will—I would give any thing to be called Paddy Barham."

"But sometimes," said Maria, "people are killed in Irish

duels; men shoot, as well as laugh, unfortunately, in this merry, murderous country of ours."

"I should not like to be killed at all," said Mr. Barham, looking rather put out; —"I should hate to die;—I havn't had much fun yet; such a tiresome stoopid thing as it is to be dead!"

Mr. Barham paused a few moments, struck with the possibility of so funny a thing as an Irish duel terminating in so stoopid a thing as death.

"But, after all, Miss Wilmot," said he, resuming his usual expression of inexpressiveness, "after all, very few persons *are* killed in duels, they are only wounded mostly.—Now, you must know, I should not mind being wounded at all. When I was at Eton, my master (the boy I was fag to, you know) used to promise me a guinea for every pin I should stick into my hand in half-an-hour—guess how many I got at once."

"Six, perhaps," said Maria.

"What do you say to two dozen!—so, you see I should not mind a little pain for fun.—But I should have a great objection to being killed—shouldn't you? Oh! Miss Wilmot, will you have the kindness to play me an Irish jig? Mr. Molly says you play so well!"

"Heaven be praised," said Maria to herself, as she moved toward the piano—"he will now hold his tongue for a few minutes, at any rate; how thankful I am he did not take it into his head to ask me for an Irish story!"

"What a funny tune!" exclaimed Mr. Barham, enchanted—"How well you do play!—Oh, Miss Wilmot, will you do me a still greater favour?—Will you dance the jig now you have played it for me?—I want so to learn jigs,—else I shall not be able to dance at your ball, you know?"

"Why, you don't suppose we shall dance jigs, do you?" said Maria, laughing.

"I always thought," replied Mr. Barham, laughing too, as he invariably did when he saw any body else laugh, even though it might be, as in the present instance, at himself,—I always thought the jig was the National dance of Ireland."

"Among the peasantry," observed Maria.

"Well, what then will you dance?" inquired Mr. Barham.

"Quadrilles and waltzes."

"Quadrilles and waltzes!" he repeated in a tone of disappointment—"Psha!—I'm tired of *them*; tiresome, stoopid things!—I'm so sorry! I made sure of such fun! Why, I might

as well be in England, if you dance nothing but quadrilles and waltzes!—To be in Ireland, and not dance jigs—how tiresome! I have been three weeks in Ireland, and I have not seen a jig danced yet!"

"Have you not, really?—I'll see what I can do for you at the ball, then; but I can't promise. To tell you the truth, I'm afraid all our rank and fashion will go into fits at the notion of such a thing as jigs any where but in a poor man's cabin, or a gentleman's kitchen. But at any rate, you can both dance and see them danced, to your heart's content, if you don't mind going into the servant's hall—I'll send for Paddy the piper, directly, if you like, for this evening."

"Oh thank you! thank you! dear Miss Wilmot!" his eyes already jig-dancing with delight, as he exclaimed,—"A piper! a real Irish piper! oh, what capital fun! an Irish piper!—and Irish servants dancing Irish jigs!—I would not have missed coming to Ireland for a thousand pounds! I wouldn't, I declare!"

"Nor would I have had you miss it for double the sum!" said Maria to herself.

Just at this moment, a little bare-legged, red-headed boy, peeped in, and having surveyed the room, was preparing to withdraw again, exclaimed, "She isn't in it;" when he was stopped by Maria.

"What are you looking for, Michelleen?"

"Lookin' every place for my lady, I am, Miss; an' can't find her."

"Why—what do you want of her, Michelleen?"

"The masther, Miss, that sent me for her."

"So, my father is returned, is he?" said Isabel, hastily throwing aside the book she had taken up on Mr. Barham's entrance—"I did not expect him back so soon!"—which observation, had it been the faithful transcript of her thoughts, would have run thus—"So, Lord Warringdon is returned. I did not expect him back so soon!" "Where is my father, Michelleen?"

"Below, in the kitchen, Miss."

"What is he doing there?"

"Seeing afther the English Lord—mysel' never can't remimber the name he has on him, Miss."

"Seeing after him," repeated Isabel—"how do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing very pertickler, Miss, only a fall he got from his horse."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Isabel, hastily—"Is he hurt? Michelleen, can't you answer?"

"Troth! I don't know, Miss; but I dare say he is—Paudeen tould me he heerd Misther Kelly telling Tom Landnigan, Misther McAlpine's man, that Pat Murphy said 'twas Mrs. McDonough's opinion he'd never ate a bit again."

"Nonsense, Michelleen," interrupted Maria, perceiving Isabel grow deadly pale,—"What rigmarole story have you got at there?—what does Mrs. McDonough know about the matter?"

"Facks, I don't know, Miss, but every one in the counthry does be sayin' Mrs. McDonough is mighty knowledgeable in regard of physics an' cures—How well she said, whin Barny Sullivan's horse was clifted and smashed intirely, that *he'd* niver ate a bit agin, Miss?"

"Yes—but Lord Warringdon has not been clifted nor smashed intirely, like Barny Sullivan's horse! so Mrs. McDonough may be wrong after all, Michelleen. But, pray, why didn't you say at once that he was hurt?"

"Sure the masther didn't bid me, Miss, tell any body but my Lady."

"The master didn't bid you, Michelleen!" cried Maria—"Couldn't your own sense tell you that much, child? So, I suppose if the master happened to fall from his own horse, and wasn't able to speak, you wouldn't tell any body, because, indeed, he didn't bid you?"

"Hubbaboo! I'd *rise* the counthry, let alone the house, if the masther hurted his little finger; not to talk of breaking his bones. God betixt us an' harum," cried little Michelleen, making the sign of the cross.

"Why, then, didn't you tell us that Lord Warringdon got the fall?" inquired Maria.

"Sure, Miss, I didn't think it signified, in regard of his bein' a foreigner, an'—"

"Didn't think it signified?" cried Isabel, indignantly—"What an ill-natured little creature you must be!"

Michelleen hung his head, and scraped the floor with the largest digit of his not very clean little foot. Mr. Barham was so busy, watching the little Irish boy shifting from one bare mottled leg to another, scratching his head and scraping the floor, while undergoing this interrogatory, that he never observed how much more important a circumstance Miss Isabella Wilmot seemed to consider Lord Warringdon's having fallen

from his horse, and "never likely to ate a bit again," than Michelleen thought it.

"Come, Isabel, love," said Maria, "let us go and see how the case really stands."

Michelleen, in high glee at escaping any further examination from the young ladies, scampered off to ascertain, for his own satisfaction, whether "the English Lord was only kilt, or actually kilt dead;" and Mr. Barham scampered off after Michelleen.

"Don't be frightened, Isabel," said Maria, as she felt her sister's hand tremble on her arm—"you may be certain it is nothing very serious, or my father would have sent no message by that stupid, blundering Michelleen."

Her supposition proved correct. They found Lord Warringdon standing in the midst of a group of idlers, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who was inspecting the letter-bag, just arrived via Andy Mr. Donogh, surnamed Andy the Post. The viscount looked a little paler than usual, and his arm was in a sling; otherwise, he did not appear by any means in a state to justify the ominous prediction of Mrs. McDonogh, as detailed by Michelleen on Paudeen's authority, which prediction really ran thus:

"'Tis well he was not hurted so he'd never ate a bit again—for there's many a one lost his life upon a smaller provication."

"I'm glad to find you still in the land of the living, my lord, and likely to continue there;" said Maria—"Michelleen all but buried you."

"Oh, 'tis a mere trifle—" returned Lord Warringdon, smiling, "a sprained wrist, only—fortunately, the accident occurred close to the dispensary, so the injury was promptly remedied."

"I hope you do not suffer much pain!" said Isabel, who had begun to recover her self-possession. The tone and look by which these simple words were accompanied left no doubt on the mind of the person to whom they were addressed of the sincerity with which they were uttered—confirmed too as they were by the agitation he had remarked on her first entering the kitchen. What man ever fails to notice the interest he inspires!

"Here are letters for you, my lord!" said Mr. Wilmot.

The party were leaving the kitchen when Barham called after Maria:

"Oh—Miss Wilmot, you are forgetting the Piper."

"Perhaps, as Lord Warringdon has met this accident," replied Maria, "it might be as well to defer it till another evening—the noise might be disagreeable to him."

"Oh no—I beg you don't alter your arrangements on my account—the pain is very trifling, and the Piper will serve rather to amuse than annoy me."

"You are quite right, Lord Warringdon:" exclaimed Barham, delighted, "I assure you a little fun is the best cure in the world for pain of any kind:" and, so saying, off he galloped in search of a messenger, to carry Maria's mandate to Paddy *Bacha*, commanding his attendance that evening.

CHAPTER IX.

"Ha!" exclaimed Lord Warringdon, as he cast his eye over the letter just handed him by Mr. Wilmot, "My father tells me that parliament is to be dissolved immediately. What shall I do? this unlucky sprain will prevent my holding a pen, and yet I ought not to lose a moment in addressing the county. Is there any one here who would have the charity to lend me a hand, while I dictate?" said he, looking round on the group.

"You shall have Isabel," said Lady Anne good-humouredly. "She is always her father's secretary; and, as he happens to be very lazy, he does not allow her pen much rest, I assure you; and, thanks to such good practice, she has become quite *au fait*,—a capital electioneering address-writing young lady, I can tell you; so here she is, at your service. You have no objection, have you, my love?" she added, in a stage-whisper, to her daughter, while she settled one of her pretty, soft curls. "I'll explain to McAlpine, you know, and, I dare say, he will forgive my disposing of you for this morning; so politics and business to-day,—love and Byron to-morrow," she continued, smiling archly. "Well, good people, I will no longer disturb you. Come, my dear Wilmot, you and I are *de trop*, here;—*au revoir*." She nodded good-humouredly, and left the room.

"I have many apologies to make to you," said Lord Warringdon, for having so unceremoniously accepted Lady Anne's offer of your assistance; particularly," added he, smiling sarcastically, "as I understand you have made other arrangements for the day."

"I am not aware of any engagement that I would not willingly have given up, to be of service to you," replied Isabel, in a faltering tone; but, fearing she had said too much, she added, blushing, "or, indeed, to any person, under the same circumstances."

"Thank you for that flattering qualification," rejoined the viscount, laughing, and contemplating his fair secretary with all the self-complacency of a gratified, vain man.

"Is your arm comfortable now?" she asked, anxious to escape from his scrutinizing look. "I fancy the sling is rather high;—shall I lower it?"

Her companion felt more than half inclined to have answered the question by touching with his lips the pretty little trembling hand of the fair querist; had she been married, in all probability he would have done so; but, in these days, to kiss a single woman's hand, is tantamount to a declaration. And so the admiring, but prudent viscount, contented himself with thanking her, in words, for her kindness. "She is a nice creature," thought he; "what a pity she has not money!"

For an hour or two, the young politicians continued immersed in business. But, as everything must have an end, the address was, at length, composed and copied out. The viscount found himself assisted by Isabel, not only in the manual execution, but also in the composition of the document; yet, her assistance had been given with so much tact, that she appeared rather to have quickly seized, and skilfully embodied his ideas, than to have suggested any of her own; so that he himself seemed even to deserve the whole credit of the performance. Never before, indeed, had he been able to clothe his thoughts in such neat and close expressions; his self-love was, therefore, gratified; and being in good humour with himself, he was naturally so with the person who had proved instrumental in producing this self-complacency.

For some time previous to this morning, Lord Warringdon had been tiring of being nothing but an *Epouvant ail des Maris*, and had desired to play a rôle in public life. But, unfortunately, he was blessed with more pretension than application; and he had often wished to possess and to have constantly near him some person capable of supplying his want of energy, but who would, meantime, be satisfied to allow him all the credit due to success and its results, not only from society, but from his very self. He was aware, however, that such devotedness could be expected from a woman only, from a wife, in fact: and where could he find a woman uniting the ability and the affection necessary for such an office? In fact, for more than a year he had been asking himself this question, and in the course of this morning it at length occurred to him that Isabel Wilmot was an answer to it. As for Isabel, her care of the *amour propre* of

her companion had been prompted simply by affection;—by the unwilled, but unerring skill of the heart; yet, had she acted from prudence and calculation, she could not have devised a better plan for advancing her interests. For, in these days of Utilitarianism, when every generous impulse is arrested by a "*cui bono*," the woman who succeeds in impressing a man with the notion that she can be useful to him has presented to his mind an *argumentum at hominem*, that, sooner or later, will work to her advantage, nay, help to get her a husband.

A characteristic of genius is, not that it can exactly create circumstances, but that it knows how to employ them. Lady Anne could not have made her husband's Arab take fright at an old woman, and throw its rider, upon that day, more than upon any other; still less could she have ensured to the said young rider a sprained wrist, instead of a broken neck or leg. Neither could Lady Anne have influenced his Britannic Majesty to dissolve his faithful Lords and Commons, just at this time, for the purpose of *synchronizing* with the viscount's tumble off his exotic horse. Still, however, was Lady Anne able to turn these events to good account. Her ladyship's previous manœuvring had so completely mystified her young guest that he never suspected her of any motive, but that of good nature, in her selection of Isabel for his amanuensis.

When Lady Anne returned, she found the young pair seated, side by side, chatting over the fire, Lord Warringdon's arm on the back of Isabel's chair, quite lover-like.

"Fie! fie! there you are talking, you idle creatures, instead of writing; it should have been business first, and play afterwards, as we say to the children! Oh, you naughty two!" said she, playfully tapping her daughter's cheek, and Lord Warringdon's shoulder.

"Thus do I disprove your foul calumny," replied he, in the same tone, holding up his address.

"No! have you really finished it? how quick you have been,—admirable!" cried she; "nothing can be better;—so dexterously composed;—no one interest sacrificed to that of another; those who wish that sinecures should be kept, because they have a chance of getting them; and those who wish to have them abolished, because they never expect to profit by them;—those who want the National debt taken off, and those who would like to increase the pension list: those who cry out for Catholic emancipation, and those who insist on keeping up the Protestant ascendancy; each and all may claim Warringdon as

their champion. Yes; the gradations of form and colour are skilfully managed, indeed, in this piece of political Mosaic! Bravo, my lord! How clever that girl is!" said she to herself; then, turning to her daughter, "What a capital diplomatist this member of ours will make; here is finesse enough for an European empire wasted on an Irish county!"

Lady Anne was aware that the great object of Lord Warringdon's ambition, for some time, had been to figure as a cabinet minister, Now she saw him smile, highly gratified.

"I am very much flattered that you approve it; but recollect that I had an invaluable assistant in your fair daughter," he politely added.

"Oh, as for my poor Isabel," replied the mother, kissing her daughter's snowy forehead, "I don't imagine that she could have been of any service to you.—No, you are not quite *diplomate* enough to persuade me you think that." Then, lowering her voice as she addressed her daughter, "McAlpine is in the next room; you may now go and chat with him, love, for he is quite moping and miserable without you."

Lady Anne perceived, with much satisfaction, that Lord Warringdon's eyes followed Isabel, as she moved reluctantly out of the room; and when the door closed on her graceful figure, and when he turned round to look at the fire, that he appeared in a very bad humour.

"Poor McAlpine," said she laughing, "has been quite like a fish out of water, all day. My heart smites me for having taken Isabel away from him: but he's so good humoured about it, poor fellow;—the most amiable being in the world."

Lord Warringdon brushed up his dark curls, and leaned back in his chair, with all the nonchalance of an exclusive, listening to an irksome subject.

"What do you think of my son-in-law elect!" said she, after a pause.

"Candidly?" inquired he, with affected indifference.

"Oh, by all means," replied she.

"Candidly, then, I think him a devilish ill-looking, stupid fellow."

"I don't at all agree with you my lord," said she, with well-acted warmth; "he is the reverse of stupid, he possesses considerable talent; and, as for looks, men never judge fairly of one another, there;—he is quite as well to be liked as the generality of people," glancing somewhat offensively at her companion.

The corners of his lordship's handsome mouth curled into an expression of quiet disdain. "My dear Lady Anne, recollect I

did not obtrude my opinion of Mr. McAlpine,—you rather pressed me for it."

Lady Anne shook her foot a few seconds, a gesture Lord Warringdon had remarked in her as indicative of displeasure; he hummed an opera air. "I should be very much obliged to you, my Lord," she continued, "not to be as candid with my daughter as you have been with myself, in your criticisms upon a person about to become a member of my family. Girls are foolish and romantic, and imagine they must be passionately attached to a man in order to marry him; and I, therefore, make it a personal request that you, in future, keep your opinion of Mr. McAlpine to yourself. It might do Isabel irreparable injury, by setting her against him."

"Setting her against Mr. McAlpine!" repeated he, sarcastically; "how could that be possible? I understood you to say he was quite the *beau ideal* of your imagination, the quintessence of all perfection, moral and physical."

"Allow me to set you right, my lord," replied she, with much offended dignity; "I am perfectly aware that Mr. McAlpine is not a Colonel C. in beauty, nor a Lord L. G. in talent; all I said was, that he had as much of both as people in general," laying emphasis on the last words. "And I add this, that he is a most excellent, kind-hearted, high-principled, honourable young man, passionately attached to my daughter, who begins, at length, to appreciate his merit, and to see that she has a much better chance of happiness with him than with a beauty, a genius, or a man of fashion.

"*Cest possible*," replied his lordship, with an indidifference intended to be provoking; "*Moi jé ne dispute jamais; surtout avec les dames*,—will you permit me to touch the bell for my servant? 'tis time to dress for dinner."

Lady Anne bowed stiffly, and Lord Warringdon determined to inform Isabel, the very first opportunity, of his opinion concerning Mr. McAlpine, should she, indeed, happen to be ignorant of it.

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Wilmot and Maria, followed by Mr. Barham, laughing as usual, "ready to die."

As soon as she thought that she might resume her usual blandness towards the Viscount, she turned to her husband;—"You have not seen Lord Warringdon's address yet, I believe;—'tis really admirable."

"Oh, I recognize Isabel's touches here," said the careless, undesigning father, pleased at this additional evidence of his daughter's talents.

"Yes," said Lady Anne, rising and touching her husband's shoulder, as she leaned over him; "You know Lord Warringdon sprained his wrist, and could not write; so it is in Isabel's hand-writing; but that does not signify."

"Oh, no, to be sure," rejoined Wilmot, understanding his wife's hint;—"'Tis excellent, my dear Lord,—cannot possibly be better: here, Maria, have you seen it?"

"What is it all about?" inquired Mr. Barham, struck by the admiration which this sheet of paper excited, as it passed from hand to hand;—"Is it a hoax Lord Warringdon has been writing, Miss Wilmot?"

"Why, really, 'tis very much the same thing," replied she, laughing; "'tis an address to the county."

"Oh, is that all?—something political only," said he, in a tone of disappointment. "I wonder that people ever trouble themselves about politics, stoopid things!"

About two hours after dinner, the door opened, and Pat Murphy entered, smiling.

"Is he come?" cried Barham.

"He is, sir."

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, he's come: good news, Lord Warringdon, he's come." And away he flew, clapping his hands, followed by Maria.

"What in the world's the matter with him?" cried Mr. McAlpine; "who is it that's come?"

"No less a personage than Paddy *Boucha*," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing.

"Ra'ally, I'm astonished at your patience, Lady Anne, with such a silly, uninteresting crature as he is: I am ra'ally exthramely annoyed that I have been the manes of inflicting him on you."

"Pray don't say a word about it, my dear friend," replied Lady Anne, with one of her most gracious smiles. "Any guest of yours would be welcome here."

"Unfortunately," resumed Mr. McAlpine, "I could not take him away without going myself; and how could I do that? how could I," he added, whispering tenderly to Isabel, who was seated between him and the Viscount, "how could I have the courage to tear myself from her I adore,—from the idol of my soul,—the soft star of my destiny? What would my fair charmer have said, in that case, of her truant knight?"

"I was just going to ask you to accompany me to the revels, below," said Lord Warringdon."

"And why not?" replied Isabel, eagerly; "I am quite ready."

"Oh, no, I must not take you away a second time, from 'love and Byron,' said he, glancing alternately at Mr. McAlpine and Lady Anne. "Your mamma and I have had a battle royal, to-day, about the '*beau futur*,' and she has commanded me, on pain of her imperial displeasure, never to say, or even to think, that Byron could have a fitter interpreter, or Love a more eloquent or persuasive votary; and, moreover, that it must be felony, without benefit of clergy, to let you suppose that I, or any body else, could ever imagine greater perfection. I never saw a woman so much in love with her daughter [illegible] in all my life; more than you yourself, I think, *la belle Fiancée*."

"You have chosen a disagreeable subject, my Lord," said she, colouring; "I should be obliged by your changing it."

"Your wishes are laws to me, my fair secretary," said he, bowing with mock deference; "never again will I say aught to disturb your equanimity;—am I forgiven? and will you take my arm, and accompany me to where they are 'tripping on the light fantastic toe,' as the Morning Post has it?"

Isabel smiled forgiveness, and they quitted the room together.

CHAPTER X.

When Lord Warringdon and Isabel entered the servants' hall, they were received with the same manifestations of joy which had greeted Maria and Mr. Barham. The huzzaing and clapping of hands was, indeed, excessively gratifying; but it was also excessively deafening; inasmuch as every member of the Castle Wilmot household, reinforced by travellers "going the road," who had lounged in for their dinner, and the idlers of the neighbourhood, who had been attracted by the piper, contributed, each and all, their utmost strength of palms and lungs, to do honour to the "quality." The acclamations for the last come couple even surpassed, perhaps, those which had welcomed the first—for in addition to the company already

alluded to, great numbers of the McAlpine tenants (who had strayed over to Castle Wilmot to see their master, in consequence of some one of the multitudinous occurrences which an Irish tenant is perpetually in the habit of referring to his landlord,) were present; and they, looking upon Miss Isabel Wilmot, as their master's property, received her with all the respect and warmth due to their future mistress; crying out, "High for Miss Isabel Wilmot! high for Masther McAlpine!" a couple already occupied "the flure,"—viz., Peggy the pretty laundry-maid, and Jim Naughton, of *sans*-pole-driving memory, who had "stepped in with his horses," on his way homewards to Masther Costelloe, from some break-neck excursion. Peggy acknowledged the entrance of "the quality," by a curtsey, as she sidled along in her dance, and kept her eyes modestly bent on the ground, never by any chance raising them to the face of her partner. Jim, on his part, evinced his sense of their presence, by whirling his hand round his head, and jumping more vigorously than he had done before, and cutting five or six times in the air.

"The lower orders of England," observed Isabel to Lord Warringdon, "suspend their merriment either from respect, or shyness, upon the appearance of their superiors; but our people, who have a truer sense of what real politeness consists in, laugh and dance as before, rightly inferring that their masters and mistresses have come purposely to witness their pleasantry, and, therefore, that respect and attention are best evinced by making an effort to amuse.

Mr. Barham was almost in convulsions of laughter at the "funny piper, and the funny dancing."

"God save all here;" cried a voice behind him.

"Oh, Mr. Molly, is that you? I am so glad to see you—" said he, seizing the priest's hands and nearly wringing them off—"I have missed you so much, you can't think! I was just wondering what had become of you!—What capital fun this is, Mr. Molly?"

"What fun, Mr. Barham? myself don't see any fun, where is it?"

"Why there;" rejoined Mr. Barham, pointing to the dancers —"don't you see the droll postilion dancing?"

"A what, droll postilion? let's thry and see:" cried father John, looking over Barham's shoulder. "Pooh—'tis nobody but Jim Naughton dancing the way he always does. I never seen one like him," said he, turning to Maria, "for seeing fun,

where nobody else but himself can see it. I don't see anything so mighty comical in a little girl and boy dancing; one would think it was dancing on their heads they were, or doing some quare trick or other: he does be laughing so; them English has no sinse at all, Miss Maria, honey."

"Perhaps, we should laugh as heartily as he does, if we saw all this for the first time, father John," observed Maria.

"May be so, *agra*, you know better than me."

The first dance ended, and punch and even good raw whiskey, were handed about.

The priest took a glass, and, holding it over his head—"Here's to the health of the young ladies, and good husbands to them, and soon—hip, hip, hurrah!"

This tost was received with huzzas and laughter, interspersed with cries of "Amin—amin—long life to 'em, the darlins—aye, troth, good husbands to them, and soon—and the sooner the betther!"

"An' now the gintleman's healths:" cried a voice in the crowd.

"Let each of the young ladies drink the health of the gintleman that's wid her:" this amendment was welcomed with cries of, "success to ye Jim—my blessing to ye!"

"Very well—" said Maria, laughing good humouredly, "here's to the health of William Barham, Esq., of Cralcourt, Leicestershire, and may he always continue as fond of fun and of Ireland as he is at this present moment—hip, hip, hurrah!"

"Glory to ye! comical crature ye are, sure enough!" exclaimed the laughing and applauding crowd.

"Now, Miss Isabel!" but Miss Isabel hesitated—"'tis your turn now, *agra*," said Mrs. McDonough—"why don't you take patthern afther your sisther, my honey—do, *asthore ma cree*, or else," continued she, lowering her voice, "the tinants will be thinking 'tis proud ye are—there's my darling:" cried she triumphantly, as Isabel prepared to oblige her—"I knew well the delight of my heart, wouldn't refuse her father's ould nurse."

"Whisht! whisht! hould your bother—don't you see she is going to spake—don't be making sich a noise:" roared one to another, as they began to applaud before she had begun to speak.

Silence was at length obtained, and all eyes were fixed on Isabel as she gave her toast—

"Here's to the health of Lord Warringdon, and may he, as our representative, ever prove the friend of the county, and of

Ireland in general, and," she added, falteringly, "live long and happily!"

"And a pretty Irish wife to him:" added Jim Naughton—"Troth, he might go farther and fare worse;" glancing at Isabel; and the cries of "Success to ye Jim!—high for Miss Isabel! high for her, the darling purty, quiet little cratur! and good husband to her, and soon!" quite confounded the poor girl.

Lord Warringdon perceived her embarrassment, and bowing, and smiling his thanks for the honour she had done him, took the glass from her trembling hand.

"To the health of Mr. Wilmot and his family!" said he—"my best wish for Ireland is, that all her landlords may be like him, and all her women like his daughters."

"Glory to ye—glory to ye, my lord—long life to ye!" shouted the people, as they thundered forth their sympathy in his wishes for Ireland, and for what they deemed the first family in Ireland.

"What a darlin' purty couple, himsel' and Miss Isabel would make:" observed Peggy the laundry-maid, to her admirer, [illegible] Murphy.

"They would so:" agreed Pat, who happened to be in a particularly complaisant humour that evening—"they would so, a'most as purty a couple as yoursel' and mysel', Peggy."

"The divil's impidence you have, sure enough," cried Peggy, "to be comparing the likes of uz to the likes of them! But, now Pat," she added, in a coaxing tone, don't you see yoursel', I was right?"

"When, asthore? when you tould me I was the darlin' of your heart, is it? you war, indeed, Peggy."

"Faith, I never tould you that," replied the bashful Peggy, "I'd be very sorry to be telling an unthruth:" spite of herself, however, smiling slily.

"Well, may be," rejoined Pat, "you mightn't spake intirely so plain as that; any how, you tould it me, the way I'd understand, 'tis that was your maning."

"Don't bother us," interrupted his gentle mistress, "tisn't that I mane at all, you know very well. No—but wasn't I right when I said, who know'd but may be the English lord and one of the young ladies would be a match—wasn't I right, Pat?"

"To be sure you war—arnt you always right, *ma colleen*

dhas?" replied he, gallantly, at the same time causing her to exclaim—

"Behave now, Pat Murphy! bad cess to your impidence! your aqual for impidence, Pat Murphy, I never seen, and the quallity by, and all—bad manners to ye."

"The Lord save us! forgive us this onst, and God bless ye, Peggy—I forgot the quallity was in it—I'll wait agin till they're gone, *ma vourneen*."

"Faith, my advice to ye is to keep your hands to yourse' for good an' all, Pat Murphy, an' behave yourse', whether the quallity is in it or no—or let who will be in it."

"'Tis you would be mad, sure enough, if I tuck ye at your word;" rejoined Pat, laughing provokingly.

"*Scnadth wanordth!** Pat Murphy! how dare ye say that! I've the greatest mind in the world to give ye"—Pat advanced his face with a coxcombical expression that enraged his prudish mistress—and she raised a somewhat large hand, and let it fall heavily on his cheek—"Take *that*, ye concated omadhoun ye!"—

Pat laughed and rubbed his cheek—"ye *laned* rather heavy, Peggy, my pet—you've a'most smashed my jaw, my honey."

Mr. Barham, who had been listening to the colloquy, and who had succeeded in stifling his laughter, by nearly stifling himself in his pocket-handkerchief, could no longer restrain his delight, but clapping his hands in ecstacy at such a specimen of Irish flirtation, crying out, "You served him right—how good! oh what capital fun!"

The piper struck up a merry tune, and Winny, the housemaid, came up and dropped a curtsey—"Mr. Barham, if you plaze, sir," said she, smiling and blushing.

"What is it? do you wish to sit down?" asked he civilly, making room for her.

"It's axing you to dance, she is, sir;" said Peggy.

"Is she really? I am very much obliged to you, Winny, but I'm sadly afraid I don't know how to dance a jig yet; I should put you out, I'm sure."

"Oh, not at all, sir;" replied the girls, chiming in together—"'tis mighty asy, you have nothing in the world to do, sir, only just to humour the tune, and whatever side of the room your partner does be, to keep opposite to her."

* A hungry cry in the morning to ye!

"And whin its over, sir," interrupted Pat, "just to put your arm round her purty little waist, and say thank ye, my Pet, and shoot the action to the word, sir."

"What a funny fellow you are!" cried Mr. Barham."

"Hould your bother, Pat Murphy!" said Winny, reddening with offended modesty.

The crowd cheered the young Englishman as he stood up to dance.

"Ax your partner what tune she'll have, sir:" whispered Jim Naughton.

Barham adopted the suggestion.

"Oh, 'tis all the same to me, sir, whatever yoursel' would like, would be pleasing to me."

"No, let you choose, Winny—you know best what tune will suit us."

"Ax her, sir, would she have 'tattered Jack Walsh.'"

"Oh, what a funny name:" cried Barham.

"Choke me! Jim Naughton!" cried Winny, frowning.

"Perhaps you do not like to dance that tune?" observed Barham, good-naturedly—"you can choose any other you like better."

"Oh, there's nothing she likes so well as that, sir:" interrupted Jim, laughing—"she doats down upon it."

"You have some joke about it, I am sure, Jim—do tell me what it is, there's a good fellow!" cried Barham, eagerly.

"Oh, nothing at all, sir, only a boy, a friend of mine, one Jack Walsh, that does be dhriving along with mysel', for misther Costelloe; and himsel' and Winny does be mighty great together, he's her bachelor, you know, sir."

"Faith, an' he isn't:" interrupted Winny, scowling at her lover's *fides achates*, Jim Naughton.

"An' he's a great fighter and roisterer at fairs, an' pattherns, sir," continued Jim, "an' one turn he got the worst of it, at the fair of Derrymanagoslogh, hard by the castle here; an' he come in here the same night to Winny with his clothes tore to tatthers, the most miserable looking cratur ever you seen, sir, an' ever sence we called him tatthered Jack Walsh, after the jig—an' Winny does be mad, on account of the joke about her bachelor. Whenever you want to make Winny come up stairs smart to you, sir, you've nothing to do but to call out over the bannister, 'Tatthered Jack Walsh,' an' 'tis, she will skelp aft to ye, in a jiffy, sir."

Barham enjoyed amazingly this piece of Irish wit—while waiting for some tune which should suit Winny's taste, and yet not furnish Jim with materials for mischievous applications. Barham talked to his partner.

"So, in Ireland, the women ask the men to dance—what funny girls you must be! but when you want to be married, do ye ask the men to marry ye?"

"Ax the min to marry us, is it? Musha, faith an' we don't—why would we? Thank God, there's no occasion, indeed, we'd be giving oursel's that throuble any how, they've good warrants to say that much for themsel's. Faith, they'd have to wait long enough if they waited till we'd ax 'em—pity, indeed!" Here the jig struck up: "now, if you plase, Mr. Barham."

Barham, who had rather a good ear, contrived "to humour the tune," very tolerably for a first attempt; and his love of fun inspired him with all the agility necessary—he jumped and shouldered very much in the style of Jim Naughton, to the inexpressible delight and admiration of the bye-standers.

"What an iligant match himsel' an' Miss Maria would be!" observed Peggy, "they have such gaining ways with them, jist cut off the same patthern the pair of 'em are—an' so found as he is of her—evermore running afther her, you'd think he'd lose his life when she's out of his sight a minute—axing about her, an' looking every place for her—an' thin such screeching laughing as they do be having together, whin he finds her ont more."

"Pooh! he is no match for her, he has no sense:" remarked Bartly the groom.

"'Tis you that's the judge sure enough, whether he has or no;" retorted Peggy.

"What matthers about his sinse?" observed the cook, "she has enough, I'll be bound, for hersel' an' himsel'."

"T'will be a match, you'll see:" insisted Peggy.

"It won't;" cried the groom.

"It will;" reiterated Peggy—"an', moreover, Miss Isabel an' the English lord will be another match, as sure as my name is Peggy Flanagan."

"Oh thin your name isn't Peggy Flanagan, so," interrupted Mr. McAlpine's groom, "that will never be a match I can tell you—"

"Why won't it?" demanded Peggy—

"Becase," answered he, "my masther Mr. McAlpine will niver let her lave this country—he intends keeping her for him-

sel'—he dotes down upon her, an' well he may, for she's a most beautiful, iligant, finely edicated young lady, as ever you'd wish to see—jist the moral for himsel', for all the world—they're as like one another as two pays—every one in the counthry does be saying they're made a purpose for one another—you niver seen sich a way as he does be going on about her, up at the castle—there a most iligant mare he has, he has called afther her—an' a boat he has on the lake that gais by her name, too—un' he does be making poethry on her, out of a poethry book he has up at the castle, at home—an' he does be repeating the poethry when he does be out riding—an' I'm credibly informed," continued he, lowering his voice, "that he's come here this turn a purpose to make his purposals for her, out o' hand—see there! how he's jist come, along with her ladyship—look at himsel' an' Miss Isabel, now—Isn't he coorting her, like mad, this minute—see how well he can't take his eyes off her, but does be whispering to her, something I'll be bound she's mighty pleased to hear, see how purty an' modest she keeps lookin' on the ground."

"My blessing to her—she's in the right of it!" muttered Peggy unheard by the last speaker—"not to be looking on an ugly yallow cratur of his kind—poor girl, as I am Mrs. McDonogh, I'd rather beg the world over with one I'd like, than I'd be sitting on a throne of goold with the likes of him, beside the—"

"Mysel' don't so much mis-like him, truth," observed Winny, who had just joined the group of Castle Wilmot followers, then occupied descanting out of hearing of the McAlpines on the ill-favoured visage of their Lord—"he's always a good warrant to give me five or six tinpinny bits, if he stops but the night—an' I never seen a gintleman less trouble in his room, than himsel'—he's a mighty clane gintleman, Peggy—mighty clane, itsel'—the one jug o' wather, an' the one towel lasts him for a for'night—an' thin such other splashing and washing, an' slopping an' lathering as other gintlemen keeps, one must be always running every minute to give a touch at the flure, Peggy—"

"I'm not saying whether he's a clane gintleman or no," rejoined Peggy—"I have nothing to say to him good or bad, thank God! all I'm saying is, that the English Lord would be far beyant him, in regard of husband for Miss Isabel—"

"Avoch—to be sure, he would, Peggy—it will be a match you'll see, Peggy."

"A' to be sure it will—isn't that what I'm saying all night!"

"When my master Mr. McAlpine marries Miss Isabel Wilmot," observed Tom Landrigan, Mr. McAlpine's man, to Mr. Kelly and Pat Murphy, "what rejoicing there will be all over the counthry! what an eligant wedding we'll have; Castle Wilmot, and McAlpine castle will carry everything before 'em—the two finest intherests in the county, Mr. Kelly—they 'll return the two mimbers, asy—"Faith they would so—observed Mr. Kelly—"as asy as they'd swallow a tumbler o' punch—"

"Aye troth—" said Pat.

Mr. Kelly and Pat Murphy, as men and politicians, were less annoyed by Mr. McAlpine's "yallowness" than the females of the household. To return "two mimbers of the county" was, in their opinion, the culminating point of human grandeur; and Mr. McAlpine having the greatest number of freeholders after their master, was of course the next greatest man in their eyes, and a far more important personage than Viscount Warringdon, consequently a much more desirable alliance for the family. In the glorious days of the "*forty shillingers*," a gentleman's importance was estimated not so much by the productiveness of his acres as by their quantity, and the number of ragged human beings he could contrive to *pen* upon them. Lord Warringdon might be the first man in England, for anything Mr. Kelly or Pat Murphy knew or cared to the contrary, but he was not "the first man in the county" any how, nor the second neither. The Castle Wilmot household divided, however, on this question. The men being all for Mr. McAlpine, the women for Lord Warringdon, "because he was a beautiful gintleman, and so grand looking;" because Mrs. McDonogh had said that Mr. Symmons had tould her that the finest ladies in the land were fighting who should have him, an' that he could have his pick and choose whenever he liked of 'em, married or no,—an' that he lived in the greatest state and grandeur, with the greatest retinue of servants that ever was seen.

"Pat, you'll see 'twill be the English lord she marries," said Peggy.

"It won't," rejoined Pat.

"*Naboclish*,—you'll see if it won't. Mrs. McDonogh, ma'am, won't it?"

"Of coorse it will," answered Mrs. McDonogh.

"Why of coorse?" asked Pat.

"I am not going to inform you, Pat Murphy, what private

have for thinking so," returned Mrs. McDonogh, con-
lly.
hing I'm sure of, at any rate," said Peggy, "hersel'
Maria will be married soon, whomseever it may be
ount of the dhrame I had."
: dhrame, Peggy?" inquired Mrs. McDonogh.
at dhrame I had, ma'am, about cats and dogs fighting."
that's a fine dhrame,—you couldn't have a better one
ge, Peggy."
always heerd tell, ma'am, that to dhrame of cats an'
ing was the finest sign in the world of a marriage."
us your dhrame, an' God bless you, Peggy," said
)onogh.
ning I was, ma'am, that I was sitting below, in the
dhrying my clothes, becase the chimbly smoked so in
hry, I was afeard they'd be all black; an' while I was
ere, wondhering how long they took to dhry, there
big black dog, with red eyes."
ye sure his eyes was red, Peggy?" demanded Mrs.
h.
ma'am,—and he kept running about every place, as
was looking for something. Mysel' got frickened,
so big an' terrible; an' I was staling out unknownst,
ɛerd a cat mewing outside the scullery window,—sich
ring, Mrs. McDonogh, you niver heard. In my dhrame
'twas Kutty Murphy's cat, that run wild, an' used to
g in the shrubbery beyant, an' the little boys that used
win' stones at her, you know; the masther bid 'em
for their lives would they do the like again. Well, I
was Kutty Murphy's cat, so I opened the window,
ır in, for fear the masther would be mad if I did'nt;
id, hersel' and himsel' began fighting. Och! Mrs.
h, they bate all ever you seen! tearing an' scratching,
ng, an' spitting, like mad. My heart was bateing like
when I woke, Mrs. McDonogh."
's a fine dhrame, Peggy, I'll explain it to you."
k'ee, ma'am."
big black dog," resumed Mrs. McDonogh, "is a
ı of great fortune an' clever appearance; you remim-
xing ye, Peggy, were ye sure of the colour of his

"I do, ma'am," rejoined the dreamer.

"Red eyes," continued the expounder, "is a sign he comes from England; an' lookin' about every place is a sign he comes over here for something particklar,—ye know the English lord come lookin' for the county; the cat mewing is Miss Isabel,—ye know she's not so hearty as what Miss Maria does be; then, you know, hersel' an' himsel' fighting is a sign it's married they will be."

"That's jist what I was thinking mysell', ma'am. "Well, afther that, Mrs. McDonogh, I fell asleep the second time, and I thought mysel' and my little sisther was below at the river, wringing out the clothes, an I felt something scrape my arm an' I looked back, an' what should I see, but a little, small white dog, with a collar about his neck; an' he kept scrapin', scrapin,' even till I looked up, an', faith, there was a cat, a mighty ugly one, itsel', above in the three; a small, miserable-looking cratur, as ever you seen! an' while I was lookin' at her, she turned into a cat as big as a horse; and she jumped off the three, all of a suddent, and tuk the little dog, and began randlin' him. Well ma'am, they fought, and tore each other to bits, an' she finished by atin' him, intirely, all to his collar, an' she tuk that in her mouth, an' wint an' scraped, scraped, even till she made a hole in the ground, an' put the collar in it,—and then I woke, for Winny gave a kick in the bed."

"That's a fine dhrame, too, Peggy: the small, little white dog is Mr. Barham: an' the collar is a sign he has a fine fortune; an' the scrapin' is a sign he's always talkin'; the cat in the three is Miss Maria; an' lookin' miserable is a sign that she isn't so at all, Peggy;—dhrames, you know, always goes by conthraries:—well, then, her changing to be as big as a horse, is a sign she's to have a fine, large house, and a great dale of children."

"The Lord be praised!" cried Peggy.

"Well, Peggy, her throttling the little dog is a sign she'll have more sinse than him; an' ating him up alive, of coorse, is a sign its man an wife they'll be."

"An' the collar, Mrs. McDonogh, what does that mane, ma'am?"

"Oh, the collar, Peggy, is a sign there will be no ind to the grandeur an' prosperity she's to live in;—an', moreover, that she's to have the upper hand of him;—for she tuk the collar of him, you remimber, Peggy?"

"Musha, that it may be so!" ejaculated Peggy. "God sees and knows, Mrs. Mc Donogh, there isn't a night nor morning I don't pray for husbands for 'em both. Miss Isabel isn't so intirely *lauchy** a cratur as Miss Maria, but she's a mild, quiet little cratur, never gives a sour look, nor cross word;—the Lord purtect 'em both! Miss Maria more especially. What in the world's that they're screeching about there, beyant, Barry Sullivan?"

"Pat Sullivan, Mr. Mc Alpine's foster-brother, that's axing Miss Isabel to dance; and Misther Mc Alpine's tinants are clapping her," replied Barney.

"Mc Alpine and Wilmot for ever!" cried the Mc Alpine followers; "high for Misther Mc Alpine!—high for Miss Wilmot!"

"Them tinants of Mr. Mc Alpine are mighty impident, ar'n't they, ma'am?" questioned Peggy of her oracle, Mrs. Mc Donogh; "You'd think, to hear 'em going on, their masther had nothing in the world to do, but jist to come coortin', and got for axin!"

"What matthers what ignorant people of their description think at all?" replied Mrs. Mc Donogh, shrugging her shoulders, as she cast a look at the yelling, hand-clapping Mc Alpine's followers.

"What manner of breeding can the likes of them have, who has no experience of life? hould your chat," said she, angrily, to one at her side, who was roaring out for 'Miss Isabel and Misther Mc Alpine;' "hould your tongue,—don't you see she don't like it?"

"She does like it," interrupted Pat, afraid of offending the Mc Alpine consequence; "she likes it well, I promise you; only she's ashamed, because Mr. Mc Alpine is by."

Mr. Mc Alpine, though he seldom condescended to dance, thought that this occasion might prove one of the few exceptions to his general rule; and to reward the fair Isabel for her graciousness, in dancing with his foster-brother, and to show his sense of the compliment, thereby paid himself, he stood up and relieved his follower, an expression which means that he took the man's place in the dance, who, according to the usual etiquette, immediately sat down. The shouting and cries of "High for Miss Isabel! high for Misther Mc Alpine!" redoubled, to his delight, and her annoyance, and to the gratification of the men, and infinite displeasure of the women of the Castle-Wilmot establishment. Winny, from her occasional attendance on Lord Warringdon's room, as well as on account of getting a compliment

* In this sense, *gracieuse.*

from him, now and then, on her rosy cheeks and blue eyes, when they accidentally met on the stairs, was on talking terms with the Viscount; hence she now addressed him thus:—If I was a fine, cliver gintleman, I wouldn't let a nice young lady have such a yallow face as *that*, for a partner; glancing at Mr. Mc Alpine, "when I'd have a good one of my own to put in its place," laughing, slyly, as she looked up at Lord Warringdon.

"Perhaps, she might be displeased, Winny," replied he, smiling at the compliment and insinuation it conveyed.

"Displeased, is it?" cried Winny; "Musha faith, an' she wouldn't; an' why would she? she has her eyes in her head."

Lord Warringdon took the hint, and, imitating what he had seen others do, relieved Mr. Mc Alpine, who looked waxing very indignant, thereupon; Isabel, however, did not;—her previous flush of vexation was immediately replaced by one of another expression.

The people regarded his lordship's movement as a jest, permitted by the rules of the dance, to separate and disconcert the lovers; and a jest being always well received by the Irish people, particularly from a superior, his good-humour in thus joining in the amusements of the evening, notwithstanding his fall in the morning, helped him on wonderfully as a candidate; and he was rewarded by shouts of laughter, and cries of "Warringdon for ever! success to him! high for the English lord!"

"He's a fine, cliver gentleman," observed the Mc Alpine servants: "I'd be glad the masther would vote for him; he has no pride nor consate about him at all."

"Thrue for ye!" cried Jim Naughton; he's a ra'al gentleman, every inch of him;—he made me a compliment of a five-pound note, for dhrivin' him up here; and though he thought (the crature) 'twas all my fault he stuck in the bog-hole, an' his bones broke a'most in comin' along, devil a word he said cross, or out of the way, to me: and before he set out, breakin' his heart laughin' at one thing or other, jokin' with mysel', you'd think 'twas his born brother I was, faith, you would. Pat Sullivan, I hope," he continued, turning to Peggy, and whispering, in order that Pat Sullivan might not overhear him, "I hope it's him she'll marry, an' not Misther Mc Alpine, with his big, yallow teeth, an' poor, little, miserable, squeezed-up, starved, carcass; like a weazle he is, for all the world, an' nothing but skin an' bone, no substance in him at all; the English lord would make two of him, Peggy. By my conscience! if I was a young lady, I wouldn't look at him, itsel', let alone marrying him: and he's a great negur, as ever you seen, in his own house, Peggy."

"A-thin, is he, Jim? well, to be sure, an' them tinants of his,

that does be braggin' so out of him, what a fine house he keeps, an' how he's like the masther, for all the world—evermore giving, giving."

"Oh, the liar of the world!" cried Jim; "like the masther, indeed! they must be the divils, intirely, if they say that. The time I druve the officers' ladies there, you know, Peggy, an' that I smashed my pole, an' druve 'em without a tatther of a pole, good or bad; you remimber hearing tell of that, Peggy?"

"To be sure I did;—sure the whole counthry was talking of nothing else," replied Peggy.

"Ay?" said Jim, smiling with much self-complacency; "well, my dear, he wasn't plased because mysel' and my horses was stoppin' at the house, waitin' till I'd mend my pole. I heerd him axing Tom Lanidigan, his body man, what I was doin' in it, so long. Like the masther, indeed! that supposin' you war the devil, out of hell, not to talk of a dacent boy, if you stopped in it a year would think 'twas too soon you were goin' away,—bad manners to themsel's an their companions, the liars of the world! he's no more like the masther than I'm like the Lord Leftenant, Peggy."

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Anne and Maria were overwhelmed with business for some days, making preparations for the party—settling whom they must invite, and whom they need not—those they should ask to dinner, and those they could not possibly have room for—those to whom they should offer beds, and those whom they might leave to the care of their guardian angels on their return homewards, &c. &c. The party being given in honour of the candidate, it was, of course, necessary to invite the principal constituents of the county, unfortunately, many of the principal constituents of the county had nice pretty daughters, or sisters, or wives. How then was Lady Anne to reconcile attention to her guest's interest with her maternal anxiety for her daughters?

"I am sadly puzzled, Maria," said she: "I *must* ask the men; and yet it don't always suit me to ask the women—I can't ask the men without the women, I am afraid?"

"Oh yes, you can—whenever there are pretty girls you don't choose to ask, tell them you have no beds to offer, they will understand that perfectly—every body knows it is easy to make up a barrack room for the men—one can stow them any where, but that one can't dispose so unceremoniously of ladies; at any rate, one couldn't ask whole families in the lump, that way—one must make some selection when one has half a county to be civil to, and that being the case, you can easily manage to pick out the ugly or vulgar girl of a house—the compliment is equally felt by the family; the pretty sisters will be disappointed, to be sure, but the father and mother as well as herself, will be charmed with your kindness."

"Very true," replied Lady Anne—"and we must ask the Catholic Bishop and O'Reilly, to dinner, to give Warringdon the better opportunity for conciliating them—*they* have no women, thank God."

"Don't forget the Colonel and field officers, and a few Captains or so, of the regiment—we want the band—and military men always set off a party so much," observed Maria,

"Remember," said Lady Anne, "that we write to Kitty Mc Alpine."

"Oh, by all means, she possesses, in perfection, the requisites for admittance; her brother in petticoats; ugly enough in all conscience," laughed Maria.

"We may ask all the lady Pembertons, I think, Maria."

"Oh yes, all—it would take one a century to decide which was the least hideous."

"What shall we do about the Ryans? the girls are both exceedingly pretty."

"Yes, but they are also exceedingly vulgar,"—answered Maria.

"Ah, very well, I forgot that. Now, about Eliza Fitzgerald. I am sadly annoyed. I can't possibly avoid having a bed for *her*. Mr. Fitzgerald, member for the county, and friend and colleague of your father; and yet *she* is a beautiful, accomplished, elegant-minded young woman."

"Yes, but she isn't fashionable—knows none of the people whom every body who is somebody knows."

"Her figure, my dear Maria, is splendid—there she has decidedly the advantage over Isabel—in other points, the attractions are balanced; her features are more regular, but the expression less engaging, than Isabel's; but her person—I repeat, impossible not to be struck by her."

"Granted," replied Maria, "but she's deep blue indigo. Do you imagine that all the beauty, accomplishments, and majesty on earth would atone in Warringdon's opinion, or, indeed, in that of any man, for the high crime and misdemeanor of reading Greek, and what is worse, talking of it? by the way, you appear to me to give yourself an immensity of needless trouble, picking out ugly girls for him—he would no more marry one of these pretty nobodies than he would fly."

"You don't call Miss Fitzgerald a nobody, my dear Maria."

"I don't call her a nobody *positively*, but relatively she is—nobody in town knows her—so she will be nobody to our Viscount. Besides, you ought to know by this time that it isn't quite so easy a matter to make young men fall in love with every pretty girl they see."

"I am not afraid of his falling in love with her—but I am alarmed lest his admiration be diverted from Isabel by seeing beauty of another kind—the great thing is never to suffer a man to see what is capable of dividing his attention. Let Warringdon find Isabel superior to all around her, and he will fancy her superior to all he ever saw before. I see I'm making way with him, and to lose him now, after all the trouble I have been at,

would be really dreadful, you are sure I need have no apprehensions about Eliza Fitzgerald?"——

"None upon earth," replied Maria.

Lady Anne still pondered.

"Well," said Maria, laughing, "not convinced yet?"

"Oh yes, I am easy now; that is, about Isabel."

"What are you uneasy about, then?"

"I was thinking of you, my love."

"Of me! what about me?"

"Why, I was thinking," replied Lady Anne, "whether it were possible she could do you any harm, by interfering with Barham."

Maria again laughed—

"La, mamma, what a bugbear you make to yourself of Eliza Fitzgerald! the idea of her interfering with poor Barham—she, up in the clouds, hunting sublimity, and he in the kitchen, looking for fun! Why, she will talk to him about an epic poem, and he will ask her for a droll story, and then they will fly off at a tangent."

"Perhaps so," said Lady Anne; "my mind is now quite at ease: by the way, I think Barham begins to like you."

"Not he! he doesn't care a pin about me."—

"He is always running after you, I know."

"Yes," replied Maria, "as he does after father John, to be made laugh."

"He must be a sad bore to you, my dear Maria."

"Yes, I find this courting of mine *tant soit peu ennuyant*, but it can't be helped."

Invitations were despatched all over the county, and great was the commotion excited, and various were the reports circulated as to the precise motive whereon was founded the giving of this said ball. Some said it was an electioneering party—others said it was a marriage party—and a third group insisted that it was to unite both: that is, as a compliment to Lord Warringdon the candidate, and Mr. McAlpine the son-in-law, at one and the same time. Vehicles, of all descriptions, were put in requisition, from the carriage-and-four down to the jaunting car; nay, some did not disdain even a common peasant's "car," for once in a way, to convey their daughters to a ball at "the Castle," and to a rich young wifeless English lord; for the fact of his celibacy had spread like wild fire through the country.

"You must all put into the lottery, young ladies. Lord Warringdon is not married yet," said Lady Anne, either *viva voce*, or by means of a pretty little billet, to all her prime favourites: to wit, all the cross-eyed, red-haired, *brogueaneering* young ladies

of her acquaintance—so, not a girl among them but rose the morning of the eventful day a viscountess in anticipation.

And upon the said morning, Lady Anne sent all her gentlemen out to ride, immediately after breakfast, in order, as she informed them, to turn the house out of windows comfortably during their absence. The viscount outstaid the rest of the party, and only returned in time to take luncheon and dress for dinner;—as soon as the last operation had been effected, he descended to the drawing-room, where he found a large party assembled—chiefly gentlemen; and among the number were two whose appearance struck him as being more courtly than any he had yet seen in the county of ———. The elder, a dignified, intelligent-looking man, was standing at the window, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who listened to him with much deference. The younger was sitting near Isabel, speaking earnestly with her, while she appeared quite engrossed by his conversation; occasionally lowering her eyes and blushing, as he made some observations in a seemingly playful tone: and Lord Warringdon remarked that the blush was accompanied by a smile, and that the eyes were withdrawn only for a second or two, and then raised up again to those of her companion. And his lordship also observed that the eyes last alluded to were superb dark ones; and that their owner had brilliant teeth, and a very fine expression of countenance into the bargain.

"Devilish good looking fellow," he muttered; "perhaps this is the man she likes, and not me. If he be a lover (and what other liaison can there be between such a handsome man and such a pretty girl,) he is certainly an accepted one; his manner is so gay and secure,—hers so easy and confidential;—that of both so good-humoured and friendly, nay, affectionate:" and, as he cogitated thus, he bit his lips, and knit his brows, settling in his own mind that the elder gentleman was father to the younger.

Lord Warringdon had studied, unobserved by them, the two groups we have noticed; in fact, his entrance into the room was not observed, until Lady Anne's keen eye discovered him, and drew her husband's attention to his noble guest.

"My love, you forget that this is the first time that Lord Warringdon and the Bishop have met."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear lord," said Wilmot, turning round, "I was so absorbed in politics here, that I did not perceive you; allow me to introduce my particular and valued friend, the Catholic Bishop of ——— to your lordship."

"*He* can't be the father, then," thought the viscount, as he bowed his most gracious bow, and smiled his most insinuating, vote-asking smile.

"O'Reilly, where are you?" cried Mr. Wilmot.

The handsome stranger advanced.

"My lord, permit me to present to you another friend of mine,—Mr. O'Reilly."

Lord Warringdon smiled and bowed, less graciously, however, than on the former occasion; and he observed that the stranger looked over at Isabel, and smiled also, and that she returned his smile, slightly colouring.

"If you have any friends at Rome, my lord," said Mr. Wilmot, "Mr. O'Reilly can, perhaps, give you intelligence of them; he is just returned from the imperial city, laden with music, poetry, painting, cameos, and enthusiasm."

"And good-nature, I beg you will add," interrupted O'Reilly, "for permitting you to laugh at me thus, without quarrelling with you."

Lord Warringdon had not much leisure for indulging in speculations concerning Mr. O'Reilly, as he was obliged to play the amiable to the "good interests" scattered in groups round the room. He had to laugh and chat with those he already knew;—bow and smile to, and compliment those whom he saw for the first time, such as Lord and Lady Templemore, and the five Lady Pembertons, Mr. and Miss Fitzgerald, and the Colonel of the regiment; "that he might not be extreme to mark what was done amiss" in the rioting way, when, with heads full of whiskey, and hands of shilelahs, the freeholders of the county should rush to the onslaught, to decide whether Lord Warringdon or Mr. Archer were the most fitting man to represent them.

At length dinner was announced. Lord Templemore handed down Lady Anne: Mr. Wilmot gave his arm to Lady Templemore, and Lord Warringdon, just as he was looking about for Isabel, was requested by Lady Anne to take care of Lady Mary Pemberton: Mr. Mc Alpine offered his arm to Isabel, but Lord W. remarked that she affected not to see it, and, unasked, placed her arm within O'Reilly's. At table the Viscount was flanked on the one side by the Bishop, on the other by Lady Mary; just opposite to him was Isabel, between Mr. Mc Alpine and Mr. O'Reilly: she was in her best looks, all grace and animation, laughing and chatting with O'Reilly.

"The confounded little flirt," muttered his lordship, between his teeth, as he turned round to see if he could not employ his time as agreeably with his companion as she was doing with hers. Of this lady he had had but an imperfect glimpse in the drawing-room, so he was but ill prepared for what he now saw in the full blaze of light, viz., a pale, cross-eyed, white-haired girl, with a neck rivaling in length that of the far-famed giraffe of the *Jardin-des-Plantes*.

"Devilishly impertinent of Lady Anne to place me near such a scarecrow as this." He surveyed the table;—there was not a face, within view, worth looking at, except Isabel's; the female party, being, in fact, almost made up of married women, only three girls among them: namely, the flirting Isabel, right opposite to him, as has been mentioned; Lady Mary Pemberton, close at his side, too ugly for him even to take wine with; and Miss Fitzgerald, who, sitting at a distance, at his side of the table, he could not see at all.

His lordship felt and looked much disconcerted; and his ill-humour was not a little increased by having, more than once, detected a scrutinizing glance of O'Reilly's provokingly fine eyes directed at himself; after each of which critical regards, Mr. O'Reilly would turn and say something in a low voice to Isabel, and Isabel would blush, and he would laugh gaily: and, added to all this, his lordship's audacious, yet sportive, analyzer, would again smile across the table, into his lordship's very eyes, and, in a kind of triumph, as it were, insupportable to his vanity.

"Curse him and her, too!" muttered the Viscount; "the artful little devil: I always heard that Irish women were the most confounded flirts upon earth, and, judging by Miss Isabel Wilmot, I am certain it is a true saying: the idea of making *me* a *pis aller*, —a somebody to flirt with, just to keep her hand in, when nobody she liked better was here! and to be so near caught by her apparently guileless, unsophisticated character, and devoted affection! It was God's mercy, I did not, in a moment of weakness, make some foolish speech I could afterwards have cut my tongue out for having made; she is telling him a pack of lies, this moment, I dare say, about my admiration of her; and making prodigious sport with him, for having continued constant; but I'll spoil her game, that she may depend on: I'll not ask her to dance, even, I am determined: confound her, again! I never saw such a piece of deceit in all my life."

The Catholic Bishop had to repeat an observation twice to this candidate for one of the most Catholic counties in Ireland, so completely was the politician absorbed in the man.

He, the dangerous Warringdon! for whose attentions the loveliest and most fashionable were contending, to be placed by a gawky fright nobody knew, and the beauty of the company sitting opposite, her whole heart, tongue, and eyes engrossed by another! It was an insult not to be borne!

"Have you secured Mr. Mc Alpine's interest, my lord?" inquired the Bishop, for the third time.

"Oh, yes; he and Lady Anne intend this; he shall marry her, —but"

"I beg your pardon, my lord," interrupted the Bishop, smiling, "that is not an answer to my question: I was not asking whether Mr. Mc Alpine intended bestowing himself on Miss Wilmot, but whether he intended bestowing his votes on your lordship."

"A thousand pardons, my lord, I misunderstood," returned the Viscount, colouring with indignation against himself, for the unconscious and unintentional proof he had just given of the engrossment of his thoughts. "No:—I have repeatedly sounded Mr. Mc Alpine, but have never yet been able to elicit any thing specific in the way of a promise. Lady Anne tells me, however, that he expresses himself to her favourably towards me; and that he approves my line of politics; and he throws to me, himself, hints about two brothers, three brothers-in-law, and half-a-dozen cousins in want of places, sinecures, if possible! and I promise to storm the treasury for them; but still, some way or other, I can't bring him to the point."

"No; I dare say not," returned the Bishop; "Mr. Mc Alpine is a sad, slippery gentleman, in canvassing the county, I am sorry to tell you: his vanity, as well as his interest, will prevent his declaring himself till the very day of the election; for, besides making better terms for his votes, he will show that, whatever side he throws his interest into will kick the beam, and he will have the credit, as well as profit, of being the casting voice. Mr. Wilmot could tell your lordship curious stories about him;—he has always had more trouble with the Mc Alpine interest than the whole county put together."

"What do you say, my lord, with regard to a contest?" asked Lord Warriagdon. "I was led, at first, to suppose there would be none; but, within the last week, I hear that Mr. Archer is determined to stand; for that he has married an English wife, and no longer wants the sinews of war."

"That is all true," observed the Bishop; "but money cannot, in this county, supply the want of interest: we take an equivalent for our votes, indeed, but we don't exactly sell them for hard cash. Now, Mr. Archer stands almost exclusively, as you are, of course, aware, on the Orange interest; an interest you also know, which, in this county, is in the ratio of one to a hundred. I understand he has been coaxing Mr. Mc Alpine, but has not, as yet, obtained a promise of marriage, no more than your lordship; and, unless backed by him, he cannot come to the poll; he has not even ground to stand upon."

Here the Bishop's voice was drowned by a peal of laughter from one of the side tables, at which Maria presided, and around which she had collected a band of choice spirits, composed of young men who had good interests, young ladies anxious to stand

well with young men of good interests, and a few officers reported to be sons of men of fortune.

Cries of "Capital! Bravo! Miss Wilmot, upon my soul, I never heard a better thing! Miss Wilmot, I give you credit for that! you are a larking girl! you are a knowing one!" were vociferated amidst shouts of laughter, to which, however, Mr. Barham did not lend a note; and a gentle tittering, accompanied by exclamations of, "How droll! how pleasant Miss Wilmot is!" proved satisfactorily to the company that Miss Wilmot's wit, though so noisily applauded by the gentlemen, nevertheless, was not of a description to shock the ladies of the party.

We would fain hope that our gentle reader takes sufficient interest in our fun-hunting friend, Mr. Barham, to regret his absence from the laughing band, and to have felt both regret and surprise at a fact so inconsistent with the above-mentioned gentleman's usual line of conduct. Nor do we hesitate to doubt that our said gentle reader is busy in conjectures as to the why and wherefore of this extraordinary circumstance. "Has the poor young man met an untimely end? tumbled over a precipice, or tumbled into a bog-hole? has he fallen a victim to the typhus, (cholera was not then in vogue,) or to a fit of laughter? In a word, what has become of him? something must have occurred. He never surely would voluntarily have quitted the festivities of Castle Wilmot; and if at Castle Wilmot, he would as surely have made one at the merry side-table party." In this manner do we imagine our reader to cogitate—and we feel considerable pleasure in being able to relieve his mind of all anxiety concerning our good-natured friend. He has been neither "clifted nor bogged," neither dead of typhus fever nor of laughing. He is at Castle Wilmot, although not one of the side-table party—and the only reason he is not there is that he is somewhere else—to wit, at the principal table, seated, by Lady Anne's arrangement, near Miss Fitzgerald. "Nothing like contrast," thought her ladyship—and her ladyship thought right, "he will relish Maria's funny stories more than ever after Miss Fitzgerald's aphorisms." With peals of laughter ringing in his ears, this votary of fun was, therefore, doomed, sore against his will, to listen to the voice of wisdom from the ruby lips of the fair Eliza. Understanding from Lady Anne, that Mr. Barham was a young man of fortune, fresh from the university, Miss Fitzgerald, having associated, it appears, very little with young gentlemen from college, imagined she should have a delightful chat on classical literature with Mr. Barham, and receive some learned elucidations of passages which had puzzled her.

"Pray, may I ask," she said, in the sweetest of sweet brogues

imaginable, "may I ask you, Mr. Barham, whether you consider Bloomfield's edition of Æschylus a good one, or whether you would recommend any other."

"Oh, I'm sure I don't know," replied Barham—"I think one edition is just as good as another; I never could see any difference, for my part."

"Perhaps not in the text, but with respect to the commentaries; you surely find some of them much clearer, fuller, and more satisfactory than others?"

"I declare I don't know whether they are or not, for I never read any," he replied.

"Of course you would not require the same explanations that I should, but still there are so many difficulties arising from allusions to national customs, and expressions, and political events, the influence of which, being confined within narrow limits, although at a former time of local importance, have not fallen under the notice of the historian;—and these points would be obscure to the most perfect classical scholar.—How much we are indebted to the scholiasts! but for those learned men, how little of the ancient literature would have descended to posterity!—Oh! long ago, the greater part of it must have been consigned to oblivion!"

"You are quite right, Miss Fitzgerald,—I wish to heaven it had," cried Barham, who had heard only the last sentence of the foregoing speech;—his attention during the first part of the harangue having been engaged in conjecturing what funny story Miss Wilmot could be telling.

"You are quite right; I should be devilish glad, I assure you, that every Greek and Latin book in the world had been lost long ago,—stupid pack of trash!"—

Miss Fitzgerald opened her fine eyes in amazement.

"Oh, Miss Fitzgerald, you are Irish. Will you do me a great favour."

"If it is in my power," politely answered the young lady; though not now hoping, as some minutes before she had done, that the favour asked would be a request to be permitted to look at her Italian translation of Xenophon's defence of Socrates; a morceau of which every body acquainted with the Fitzgerald family had heard;—and as the Fitzgerald family included half the county, Miss Fitzgerald thought that it included half the world.

Mr. Barham might, however, entreat her to favour him with a little music by and by;—he had heard doubtless of her proficiency as a pianiste.

"What is this favour, Mr. Barham?" said she.

"Oh! that you would tell me some droll story to make me laugh, like Miss Wilmot,—will you? I should be so much obliged to you! They shan't have all the laughing to themselves at the other table, shall they?—

Miss Fitzgerald was absolutely petrified, she, the best pianoforte player; the best French and Italian, and the only Greek, scholar in the county; to be asked to tell funny stories, to make people laugh!—

"I never tell funny stories, Mr. Barham," she replied, giving him a look that would have done honour to Minerva herself, so fraught was it with wisdom and indignation.

"Oh, don't you?" he ran on.—"What a pity!—I took into my head, somehow, you were quite an Irish girl;—never having been out of Ireland, as lady Anne told me;—so I made sure I should find you as funny again as Miss Wilmot."

"Now, we are told comparisons are always odious, but of all comparisons those between ladies are the most odious,—and if there be such a thing as the superlative of a superlative, the comparison just made was, to the person addressed, the most odious of the most odious. The greatest insult, in fact, that could be offered to Eliza Fitzgerald was to compare her with Maria Wilmot, whom she envied for her popularity, though she despised the means by which she had attained it; disapproving, at the same time, her conduct, and resenting her ridicule.

"What a senseless, tasteless inane young man!" thought Miss Fitzgerald.

"What a stoopid girl she is, to be sure!" muttered Mr. Barham, as he turned from side to side, and leaned back in his chair, in imminent danger of dislocating the dorsal vertebræ, so great was his eagerness to catch a word of what was going forward at the side table. The conversation between this well-matched pair began to flag, and soon ceased altogether.

Shortly after, the ladies withdrew, to the infinite delight of the gentlemen, and to their shame be it spoken.

For some time after, the candidate drank, and laughed, and listened to stories, "capital stories;" did all in his power, in fact, to appear a right good fellow. As soon, however, as he could do so, with propriety and due attention to his reputation, he effected his escape to the drawing-room; the bishop and Mr. O'Reilly, he perceived, having previously made their retreat.

Loud peals of laughter pursued him almost to the drawing-room door; but, just as he was about to enter it, sounds of a different nature met his ear, that is to say, the soft, clear notes of a female voice, supported and strengthened by the mellow

tones of a deep, rich tenor, modulated into the most exquisite harmony.

"Who can these be?" thought he. He went in, and saw that the singers were Isabel Wilmot and her admirer, Mr. O'Reilly.

Now, strange as it may appear, it was the first time he had ever heard Isabel sing. Her mother, aware how much the impression, in those cases depends upon surprise and effect, had always discovered that her daughter had a cold, or was out of voice, whenever his lordship proposed music: and, by these means, she accomplished two desirable objects; first, the augmentation of his curiosity; second, a proof of her total indifference about showing off her daughter to him.

Lord Warringdon had a good deal of factitious feeling, of that morbid excitability of temperament which would bring tears to his eyes at a finely-executed air by Pasta, though he might hear, unmoved, of the death of a friend; on the present occasion, so pleased and touched was he by the singers, that he momentarily forget the sins of the individuals.

"Bravo, bravo! Signora! Bravo, Signor!" he cried.

"Ha!" exclaimed Isabel, with pleased surprise; "'tis you, my lord? you have left the dining-room early."

"And should have come away much earlier, had I the least idea I should have heard such music. Why did you not give me a hint, Mr. O'Reilly, and bring me with you? I have frequently petitioned Miss Isabel Wilmot to sing, but never could prevail on her, however, to do so; but if I had once got in, she could not well turn me out; and then I might have had the benefit of her desire to oblige you," said he, in a cold, offended tone.

"Is this a true bill, Signora Isabella?" demanded Mr. O'Reilly. "Has Lord Warringdon asked you to sing, and have you been churl enough to refuse?"

Here Lady Anne touched Lord Warringdon's arm:—"Just look at Mc Alpine!"

"What for?" asked his lordship, rather ill-humouredly.

"See how proud he looks, poor fellow, of Isabel's performance! She always sings so well with O'Reilly."

"I dare say she does," assented the Viscount, significantly.

"Isabel, my love," said her mother, "look out another duett, quick, before the crowd pours in. O'Reilly, you know, don't like singing in general company:" then, lowering her voice, "sing the air Mc Alpine likes so much;—he is quite delighted with you this evening, I can tell you."

Lord Warringdon overheard this, and observed O'Reilly smile, as he whispered to Isabel, who appeared to hesitate.

"I was just going to sing something Lord Warringdon asked me for," she said, timidly.

"Do as I desire you, my dear," rejoined her mother, in an affectionately peremptory tone.

Mr. Mc Alpine now placed himself in his usual position, when listening to the lady of his love; that is, stretched across the instrument, staring her full in the face, and beating time out of time.

"How that poor girl is persecuted!" observed O'Reilly, in a commiserating tone, to Lord Warringdon, glancing at Mc Alpine.

"How do you know the lady considers it persecution?" asked the Viscount, coldly; "unless Miss Wilmot be an exception to her sex, she will not consider admiration as persecution."

"Recollect that admiration, in this case, is coupled with the pretensions of a suitor," said O'Reilly.

"I dont't see how that should make the admiration less acceptable;—I always understood the grand object of young ladies was to convert their suitors into husbands."

"Yes," replied O'Reilly, "when they don't happen to like somebody else."

"And pray who may the happy man be, who is favoured by Miss Isabel Wilmot's attachment?" said the Viscount, sarcastically.

O'Reilly smiled. "Oh, that's a secret, my lord, I can never reveal till the lady gives me permission."

Lord Warringdon repaid him with one of his searching looks.

O'Reilly hummed a few bars of an old Venetian Barcarolle.

"What a cursed puppy!" thought the noble Viscount; "and the mother such a blind buzzard as not to perceive what is going on between him and her coquette of a daughter."

"Isabel, my love," cried Lady Anne, "let O'Reilly hear your harp once more; it used to be his favourite instrument."

Though the harp was close to the sofa upon which my lord was lounging, biting his lips, he never rose to carry it towards its beautiful owner, and the lady and her harp might both have tumbled down, for any thing he cared, in his present mood. "A more impertinent woman than that Lady Anne I never met; if I was a married man, or a half-pay officer, she could not have treated me with more perfect indifference,—more downright disrespect, than she has done ever since I came into her house; she has not even let her daughter play, or sing, for me! upon my word, not a mother duchess in England would presume to treat me thus!"

While he was thus wrathfully ruminating, his attention, spite of himself, was arrested by Isabel's playing. Her execution was not remarkable for rapidity, but her touch was beautiful, so full and round, yet soft, clear, and bell-like. Then her style was charged with sentiment and delivery, and her expression exquisite, rendered more touching even than usual, by her anxiety to *interest one* in that room whom she perceived, for some cause or other she could not divine, was displeased with her.

The appeal was not made in vain. As we have before said, Lord Warringdon had a good deal of musical feeling. He listened for some time in admiration of the performance, without, however, deigning to look at the performer. At length, he suffered his eyes to rest on the fair musician.

Now, Isabel Wilmot had a very pretty little foot, and a singularly beautiful hand and arm; and the fall of her shoulders was always considered peculiarly graceful; for all these good reasons her mother had selected the harp, as her instrument; and, for the same good reasons, Lord Warringdon thought, as he now gazed on her, that Lady Anne had evinced much judgment in her selection. "A man might love such a creature as that," said he to himself, "if she were not such a confounded little flirt!"

Carriages were heard rolling round to the entrance, and a general movement took place, which disturbed the current of his lordship's thoughts, or, probably, he might have ended by perfectly reconciling himself to the fair Isabel, and have been induced, even contrary to his determination, to open the ball with her.

As soon as the music struck up, Mr. Barham, and all the young officers, and as many of the country gentlemen as had heads in dancing condition, made their appearance in the drawing-room.

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, such fun as I have had!" said Mr. Barham, holding his sides, 'ready to die;' "such fun! Mr. Molony has just knocked me down."

"Knocked you down! why, how did it happen?"

"Oh, not in earnest, you know; he was just showing me how he knocked down Mr. McAlpine, one day, and he fetched me such a thump on my shoulder, that I fell under the table! ah, I laughed so, I thought I should have died! so Irish!"

"You are not hurt then?" observed Maria.

"No, only a little stiff, but dancing will set me to rights immediately. Are you engaged this quadrille, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria informed him that she was.

"How tiresome! well, will you introduce me to a partner, then? a funny one, you know."

"I think," observed Maria, "that you ought to dance with Miss Fitzgerald, as you sat near her at dinner.

Barham recoiled in horror—"Oh, not if you were to give me a thousand pounds, Miss Wilmot!"

"Upon my word, I pity you much," Maria said, laughing: "Why, Miss Fitzgerald is the beauty, as well as the genius, of the county. She reads Greek, and writes poetry, you must know."

"I don't care whether she does or no," he replied, rather doggedly—"I got enough of her at dinner, I can tell you. What do you say to her talking all the time about Greek and Latin; and when I asked her for a funny story, she stared at me as if I had a hundred heads! Disagreeable girl! I would sooner not dance all night, than dance with her. What laughing you had, all of you, at the other table! How I did wish to be among you! you will not forget to tell me what it was all about to-morrow? Oh! Miss Wilmot, make haste and introduce me to some funny girl or other, for the quadrille is already beginning."

"Will you have one of the Miss O'Higgertys?"

"Oh yes! that's such a nice Irish name! I'm sure I should like one of them."

Maria led him up to the eldest Miss O'Higgerty; daughter to the well-known attorney of that name, who, together with his family, were invited ostensibly to secure his services at the approaching election, to Lord Warringdon, but those intimately acquainted with the Wilmots were aware that the fact of Mr. O'Higgerty having some heavy untaxed bills of costs against the Castle Wilmot estate had a considerable share in obtaining for himself, and his four bouncing, red-cheeked daughters, admittance among the "tip-top grandees" of the county.

"I don't like quadrilles and waltzes, at all," observed Mr. Barham, to his partner, "but Miss Wilmot has promised to let us dance jigs by and by. That will be much pleasanter, will it not?"

"Jigs!" echoed the young lady, with a look of consternation. "How could Miss Wilmot think of such a thing? The idea! for mercy's sake, who ever heard of dancing jigs in company?"

"A jig!" cried one—"a jig!" repeated another—and "jig! jig! jig!" ran round the room, in all imaginable varieties of tone and accent, expressive of amusement.

"So you should not like to dance a jig?" continued Mr. Barham. "I wonder at that—I should have thought you just the girl to enjoy it! such a regular Irish name! and such a capital brogue and all!"

The young lady answered with some little warmth—"What an idea you must have of Ireland, Mr. Barham! good Irish society, you know, is just the same as English—no difference in life—

I hope you don't't form so unfavourable an idaa of us as to imagine you would see any thing in good society in Ireland different from what you would see in England!"

"Well, I declare, I can't understand that at all," replied Mr. Barham. "If I were an Irishman, I should always be trying to be as Irish as possible. I would dress, and dance, and talk, and walk, and eat, and drink, and live differently from every body else in the world, so that the moment I came into a room, people would say, I'm sure that gentleman must be Irish. I would just go on the way they do in a play. I would be always swearing, and saying funny things, and fighting duels, and running in debt, and in fact, doing all sorts of out of the way things. My goodness! what's the use of being Irish, if one does just the same as if one was English—so very stupid that would be!"

"I don't think gentility can ever be stupid," Miss O'Higgerty replied, with a toss of her head—"at laste, according to *my* idaas. God forbid I'd ever see the day that Irish ladies and gentlemen would be different from other ladies and gentlemen—God forbid I'd ever see them put themselves upon an aquality with the peasantry of the country, and dance jigs! There's rason in every thing, Mr. Barham."

Now all this time, Mr. Barham had not been listening to a single word that she was saying; his whole attention having been absorbed watching Maria Wilmot and her partner, (who happened to be his *vis à vis*,) as they talked and laughed together, and he was very sinfully envying their gaiety, and puzzling his poor brains in conjecture as to what it was all about.

Lord Warringdon, much to his surprise during the evening, had not observed, among the dancers, the gay admirer of his admired Isabel. Yet he could not have been flirting with her, for she had danced every set. What could have become of him?

The Viscount strolled into the card-room, and there he found Mr. O'Reilly, and Lady Anne, talking so earnestly, that he had come close enough to distinguish his own name, pronounced in a laughing tone, by Mr. O'Reilly, before either of them was aware of his approach.

Lady Anne rose. "Can you tell me, my lord, whom Isabel is dancing with?"

"I really did not happen to observe," he carelessly replied.

For once in his life, at least, the young gentleman did not tell the truth. He knew perfectly well, not only who Isabel was then dancing with, but had observed who had been her partners throughout the evening. Neither had he failed to remark that

dancod languidly. "Because," thought he, "O'Reilly
ar her."
comes it, Mr. O'Reilly, that you are not dancing this
?" Lord Warringdon said, as they now stood together,
on at a whist party.
ver dance, my lord."
do not like it?"
I liked it, when a boy."
not your years, however, that need prevent you now, I
nagine?" said the Viscount, smiling.
not exactly my years; but it is not usual for men of my
n, at any age to dance."
oung barrister, I suppose," thought Lord Warringdon.
not aware, Mr. O'Reilly, that the Irish bar was under
urd shackles of *convenances?*"
are they, I imagine," Mr. O'Reilly replied.
ept in proscribing waltzes and quadrilles," the Viscount
d.
have been misinformed in that respect, my lord. Bar-
nay waltz all night if they please, provided they gain
ent's cause in the morning; perhaps, even they have a
ance of persuading twelve sober, steady men out of their
rom having the evening before succeeded in making fools
en or two of pretty girls."
y do you not try its efficacy yourself, then?" the Viscount

uld, if the causes *I* had to plead, my lord, were of a na-
e assisted by talking nonsense to young ladies."
I see! you are a sober chancery lawyer?"
'Reilly looked surprised.
ought that your lordship was aware of my profession—I
man Catholic clergyman."
!" Lord Warringdon exclaimed, looking in his turn
ed, and not a little pleased also—"You! a Catholic
I never should have thought so."
! Is my appearance then so very unclerical, my lord?"
eilly inquired, smilingly.
nph! I don't exactly know how to answer that question.
eed not certainly be a worse priest for happening at the
e to be a good-looking fellow; and singing as if he were
nd of song; and talking to pretty girls; but someway, if
a Catholic husband, I should rather my wife had any other
r."
lly coloured, and answered gravely—"If you *were* a
husband, my lord, you would know better, I hope, than

you seem to do at present what are, and what are not, the qualifications to be avoided in a confessor—and whether Catholic, or Protestant, I hope you may never marry a woman you might not trust with a person more dangerous than myself, even if I were a mere man of the world. But I should think, my lord, that you need not fear any rival," he added, politely.

The Viscount bowed, and smiled—and after a short pause, resumed the conversation.

"Do you know, that I imagined, you were the accepted lover of the young lady you sat next at dinner to-day."

"Excellent! Oh, come, I shall tell her that directly," said O'Reilly, laughing. "Well, certainly I must have played my *rôle* of confidante to perfection, since I appeared so interested, and sympathizing, as to be taken for the lover himself!"

"But who is this lover?" the Viscount inquired.

Mr. O'Reilly gave him one of those scrutinizing looks which had so much provoked his lordship during the former part of the day.

"Is it any body I know?" Lord Warringdon continued.

"You may *think* that you know him, my lord. But, come, come, you must not tamper with the secrets of the confessional, you know—besides, I want to see this fair mistress of mine."

Lord Warringdon took O'Reilly's arm, and they returned together to the ball-room.

Isabel was making the tour of the apartments with her partner, on whom, however, she appeared to bestow less than her usual attention, whilst he, on his part, was all assiduity. Lord Warringdon remarked that Isabel frequently looked uneasily around her, as if in search of somebody, and when, at length their eyes met, that hers were instantly withdrawn, and that turning to the young officer, her late partner, (who was, by the way, eldest son of an English baronet, of very large fortune, in the north of England,) she talked, and laughed, and did all in her power to evince perfect indifference to his approach, and although she saw him elbowing his way to her, followed by O'Reilly, never condescended to look at, or smile upon him.

"Will you dance the next quadrille with me?" the Viscount said, in his softest tone, and with his sweetest smile.

"I regret that I am engaged for the whole evening, my lord," she replied, with a graceful, haughty movement of her pretty head, which Lord Warringdon thought quite bewitching, her displeasure arising, as he saw clearly, from pique at his previous inattention.

"She has spirit, I see, as well as tenderness," said the Viscount to himself—and he liked her the better. He would soon have

ted of an affection that could not have been piqued. He, therere, felt, as well as looked, disappointed at Isabel's answer.

"You are not engaged for the whole of the evening, surely?") said in a low, gentle voice. "You must dance once at least ith me, or I shall think that I have had the misfortune to offend ou; and *that* would give me real concern."

He looked so sorry, and so handsome, that it was quite impoble for Isabel to keep up her dignity any longer.

"If you are disengaged then for the eighth quadrille, my lord, shall be very happy to dance it with you," trying to repeat iese words of course, as if they were but words of course to er.

"I cannot but admire the composure with which you dispose ? yourself, without asking my consent," said O'Reilly, with ock gravity.

"Your consent!" repeated Isabel, "pray why should I ask our consent? I am not one of your flock, am I?"

"Not one of my flock, indeed! don't you know that I have ren higher authority over you than that of priest, or confessor -that is to say the authority of an affianced husband?"

"What on earth, are you talking about?" Isabel asked with rprise.

"And how is it possible, Miss Isabel Wilmot, that *you* can ave the face to deny that I am your lover, the secret and faoured rival of mamma's knight of the castle? you need not ind *le beau viscount* here—for he knows all about it—in fact, e was the first to discover our attachment—so acknowledge the uth at once, and I dare say he will use his influence in our beilf, and induce mamma to consent to our secret union? come, my entle, blushing, Isabel, *speak* to our friend." And he imitated ie tone and look of Mr. Mc Alpine so perfectly, that, notwithanding Isabel's embarrassment at some of the allusions in Mr. 'Reilly's speech, she joined in Lord Warringdon's laugh. But ough somewhat confused, she was also made very happy by is same speech, finding in it a clew to her lover's sudden change manner towards her.

Lady Anne joined the group.

"My lord, if you are not engaged this set, I wish you would low me to introduce you to a young lady."

"My dear lady Anne, what else have you been wishing, and ing, all night, than inflicting young ladies upon me? and, by e way, a more diabolically hideous set of young ladies I never d the felicity to encounter. I really must sit this quadrille, or hall die, and, moreover, have to lay my death at your door. ily think, how it will figure in the Morning Post—'On the

25th of this month, died at Castle Wilmot, in the county of— Viscount Warringdon, eldest son of Earl Glenville, of a sm of ugly partners.'"

"Oh, come, nonsense," Lady Anne said, laughing, and wa ing him away. "What does it signify about the daught looks, if you get the fathers' votes? I think it a cheap purch for my part."

"You do? I have not, then, the honour of agreeing with y But do tell me how it happens that your women are not pret in this part of Ireland? The men, most of them, are very fi looking fellows, and have a good, dashing air about them, but t women are plain and——"

"Come, come, you must not be so ungallant. At any rat you shall not, this time, have to complain of the want of attra tion in your partner, for I am going to introduce you to Miss Fit gerald, the most beautiful girl in our county."

"Not while your daughter remains in it!"

"Oh, Isabel cannot be termed beautiful;—she is an elegan interesting girl, but that is all; whereas, Miss Fitzgerald's fac and figure are faultless. But, however, many agree with you i preferring Isabel. Do you know I never could account for the extraordinary admiration she has excited, for I really and unaf fectedly have always considered her overrated. Then, again Miss Fitzgerald has much more acquirement than Isabel,—sh speaks seven languages,—my daughter only knows French an Italian."

"An abundance, my dear Lady Anne, for any woman to know French for the ball-room,—Italian for the *boudoir*. I shall brin in a bill into this new parliament to make it felony, without benef of clergy, for a lady to learn more. These young ladies, o seven-language power, are absolute inflictions."

"She is an admirable classical scholar, too."

"Angels and ministers of grace defend me!" the Viscount ex claimed, throwing himself into an attitude. I'll empty all thes veins, and shed my dear blood, drop by drop, to please or serv you, but this I cannot, dare not do."

"You ridiculous creature," interrupted Lady Anne, laughing "Come on,—oh, you must, indeed, or neither she nor her fathe will ever forgive you."

"Necessity has no law," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

He assumed, however, his most insinuating smile, when h asked the favour of dancing the next quadrille with Miss Fit gerald.

Now this young lady was, indeed, not only a profound class cal scholar, and admirable pianoforte player, but she was al

enlightened politician, and this branch of her knowledge she y brought forward for the special entertainment and edifica- n of the new candidate, who, however, unfortunately happened dislike politics as much as Mr. Barham did Greek: all the ropean governments, in succession, underwent her critical amination, in the intervals of "*avant deux*" and "*chassez isez.*"

"What a handsome bore that woman is!" said the Viscount himself, as he resigned the learned Eliza to her new partner. At length, the seven quadrilles, which stood between Isabel d Lord Warringdon's, were got through, and he had just come claim her, when Lady Anne stepped up to them.

"Oh, my lord, I want to introduce you to Miss Mc Alpine."

"Impossible, my dear Lady Anne, I am already engaged."

"To whom, may I ask?"

"To Miss Isabel Wilmot."

"Oh, what does that signify?—Isabel can easily find another rtner, and she will equally give you credit, for your good in- ntion in her favour. You don't, I suppose, want to make a nquest of her,"—she added, laughing.

Lord Warringdon felt the hand on his arm slightly tremble, s Lady Anne thus seemed so quietly to take for granted their tter indifference to one another. Instinctively, he pressed the ttle soft hand, as he replaced it on his arm.

"Oh really, Lady Anne, you must excuse me, this time."

"And, oh really, Lord Warringdon, I can do no such thing," he answered playfully.—"Come away, my dear Isabel, we must ot give this lazy candidate of ours any excuse," and she drew er daughter's arm within hers, and walked her off.

—"Was there ever such a provoking persecuting marplot?" the 'iscount muttered, as he made his bow to Miss Mc Alpine.

The band struck up a waltz, he deposited his hideous one on he first vacant seat, and looked round for Isabel—whom he dis- vered at last, Mr. Mc Alpine sitting near her and laughing, as vas his custom, on three chairs at once, and rolling his large un- neaning eyes; and just as he was apologizing to her, for not sking her to waltz, being "afraid," as he said, of "throwing er down," (the usual finale of his waltzing enterprises,) and as he was smiling forgiveness, Lord Warringdon walked up to hem:

"You waltz, do you not?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Let us be off then, before *la chère maman* makes a reappear- nce with a new fright in her hands—one would think all the hi- eousness of the county had rendezvoused here to-night—come,

la belina, carina, flirtina," he said, playfully putting his arm round her waist.

The whole room was in admiration of the graceful movements of this handsome couple, and none more so than Lady Anne herself, although, when they paused a moment to take breath, she asked her daughter in a displeased tone—

"Why are you not dancing with Mr. Mc Alpine, my dear?"

"Because, mamma, Mr. Mc Alpine never waltzes, you know."

"*Allons donc,*" said the Viscount, replacing his arm. But Isabel hesitated, for she saw that her mother was offended.

"Why, what is the matter? are you tired?" he asked.

"No," answered Isabel, colouring. "But mamma does not wish me to waltz."

"Oh, I beg pardon—I was not aware of your mamma's objection to it, or, of course, I should not have asked you."

Lady Anne continued to bite her lips and play with her fan. Isabel sat down and turned her back on Mr. Mc Alpine, and Lord Warringdon turned his on Lady Anne.

"Confound the woman!" he muttered, as he folded his arms, and stretched out his legs.

"I thought you were going to waltz, my lord?" Lady Anne observed, in her sweetest and most guileless manner.

"I was, but your ladyship prevented me," he answered.

"There are plenty of *valseuses* in the room, besides my daughter; for instance, Miss Mc Clintock, who waltzes beautifully; shall I introduce you?"

Now, Miss Mc Clintock had a pair of staring light blue eyes, by no means to the taste of his young lordship, so he met the offer rather coldly.

"I am much obliged to your ladyship, but I have changed my mind, and do not intend waltzing all the evening."

"As you please, my lord," she replied, with offended dignity.

"Mr. Mc Alpine! will you have the kindness to give your arm to Isabel as far as the next room, for I am sadly afraid of her taking cold here."

Poor Isabel was ready to cry from vexation, but how soon would her tears have been converted into smiles, could she have seen the glance of indignation and offended pride which the Viscount darted at her mother!

During the remainder of the evening, he scarcely condescended even to speak with his hostess, who, in consequence, retired to rest that night, full of the most joyful, and brilliant anticipations. O'Reilly had mentioned to her Lord Warringdon's amusing supposition with regard to himself, and thus the ill-humour which had been observable in his manner during the former part of the

evening, was most satisfactorily accounted for. The apathetic Viscount was jealous! the manœuvring mother clapped her hands in delight.

"He must not, however, my dear O'Reilly, be allowed to fritter away his feelings, in the empty attentions and unmeaning gallantries of a ball-room. So, I must keep my eye upon him, and prevent his speaking with her this evening; nothing like thwarting, and counter-plotting, for such a temperament as his—in order to give impetus to his otherwise evanescent impressions.—So, if I do not allow him to flirt with her to-night, he will rise to-morrow downright in love with her."

And, as our readers may have observed, to this plan she had pertinaciously adhered throughout the remainder of the evening.

CHAPTER V.

Did Lord Warringdon awake, the morning after the ball, "downright in love" with Isabel Wilmot?

We do not choose to speak too decidedly on the subject, but our belief is that some progress has been made in causing his lordship to thaw; inasmuch as the attentions which he had originally paid Isabel, merely to supplant her lover, and outwit her mother, (the person he liked best to outwit, after a husband,) without any ulterior object beyond the amusement of the hour, he now offered from interest in herself. For the first time in his life, he was sure of having inspired a genuine and spontaneous affection, wholly unprompted by interested speculations, evidently discouraged as it was by her family; and again, this attachment was so delicately indicated, so dignified by reserve and womanly pride, that he never could venture to presume upon his discovery of its existence.

And how did Isabel awake the morning after the ball?

Why, very happy, and very tired—for she had passed the whole night thinking of all that Warringdon had said, and all he had not said, but which he very likely would have said, had not her mother, either accidentally, or designedly, interfered to prevent him, by never allowing them to remain a moment together.

"Oh yes!" said she, to herself, "now I am sure he loves me! for what an instantaneous change took place in his manner, from the time he discovered that O'Reilly was not a rival. Dear, dear Warringdon! generous, disinterested Warringdon! how I love you! but I would not for worlds you knew *yet how* deeply! how devotedly!"

Naturally of an affectionate disposition, and meeting no return of tenderness from her own family, she had a superabundance of love at her disposal, all of which she now bestowed on the handsome, fashionable, agreeable Viscount, quite sure there was in the transaction a strictly honest exchange of commodities.

On the evening of that day, the usual family party, with the addition of Mr. O'Reilly, were assembled in the drawing-room.

mot, and his agreeable reverence, were talking politics.
ıd Mr. Barham trash. Lady Anne and Mr. Mc Alpine
ıt. And Lord Warringdon was sitting near Isabel,
love, or at least, something so a kin to it that she quite
ı *papier maché* box which she had intended for her

conversational duetts, carried on for some time, in an
ne, were at length interrupted by Lady Anne.
l, Mr. Mc Alpine, I will 'take the sense of the house,'
ı motion. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly, do leave off count-
ı for one moment. Lord Warringdon and Mr. Barham,
your flirtations with my daughters, if you please, and
your several opinions upon a certain knotty point, which
ı to disturb the hitherto-unbroken amity that has sub-
tween Mr. Mc Alpine and myself."
e gentlemen, except Lord Warringdon, obeyed her com-

ı the case, Lady Anne," Mr. O'Reilly said.
r, you must know, gentlemen, Mr. Mc Alpine has the
to tell me that he prefers Irish, to English, women!
ıg to him, they are prettier, wiser, better, more capable
, and more worthy of being loved; more engaging as
re estimable as women; more devoted mistresses, and
tached wives; fonder mothers, kinder friends, and—
knows what besides! In one word, the enumeration of
ı of superiority, if noted down, would reach from this to
ine Castle. Now, is not this too bad? Come, Wilmot,
you say? Which are you for, English or Irish?"
I enter my vato (veto) against receiving his vote at all,"
Alpine interposed; for he will judge of English women
g to his own experience, and attribute to them generally
ctions peculiar to Lady Anne Wilmot."
ık you, Mr. Mc Alpine," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing,
ing me the trouble of making a civil speech to my own

l, now the speech has been made for you, pray give us
ı," said Lady Anne.
r, that happens to be rather a puzzling sort of vote;—my
nglish, and my daughters are Irish,—how can I decide
them? Now I have it:—I would recommend English
ı my own sons, (wishing they may be as happy as myself)
women to the sons of other people."
o, Signor Padre!" Maria exclaimed. "I like that dis-
passing well. Now, Mr. O'Reilly, it is your turn."
I have nothing to say to any of you, English, or Irish:

and, as my vocation is not that of gallantry, I may be allowed, perhaps, to add, I am not at all sorry for it, inasmuch as I think that man the happiest who thinks least about you."

"What a sacrilageous idea!" Mr. Mc Alpine cried.

"Oh, capital! I think you are quite right, Mr. O'Reilly. A wife is such a stoopid, cross sort of thing,—always scolding, or advising one! there you must be as sober as a judge; no fun after once a man is married: so I am determined to be an old bachelor,—positively I am!" exclaimed Barham.

"Positively you shall not be, though," thought Lady Anne, and so thought Maria.

"Well, now let us count up the votes. Mr. Mc Alpine gives a plumper to the Irish; Mr. Wilmot appears inclined to split his vote; Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Barham will have nothing to say to either of us, so I am afraid the Irish have it. Oh, but I was forgetting! Lord Warringdon has not given his opinion yet. Come, my lord, which are you for, English, or Irish?" asked Lady Anne.

She was extremely happy to find that his lordship had not been attending to a single syllable of the previous discussion, so that she had to repeat the conversation all over again.

"Now, my lord, that I have put you in possession of this most difficult case, pray let us, at once, have the benefit of your critical and fastidious taste, knowledge, and experience. Recollect, that you are English, and that you are this day the sole champion of your country, for Mr. Barham proves a recreant knight. Now, therefore, Viscount Warringdon, 'for St. George and England?'"

"Recollect, my lord," Maria cried, "that although you belong to England, you are in Ireland; that we are two to one here, at present; and that Isabel and I have long nails; so your vote or your eyes, my lord;—'high for St. Patrick and Ireland'!"

"Was ever man placed in a more difficult predicament! Honour, patriotism, and Lady Anne, on one side; gratitude, long nails, and the Miss Wilmots on the other! Fair ladies, thus do I decide between motives and attractions so equally balanced:—I am for English women generally, but Irish women particularly."

"Oh, you mane you prefer English ladies to flirt with, but you would be more sariously attached to an Irish woman."

"*Oui, si elle te ressemblait, belle, bonne et spirituelle,*" the Viscount whispered in Isabel's ear. "Just so, Mr. Mc Alpine," he said aloud.

"Now, I move, that the ladies' opinions of the relative merits of the gentlemen of both countries, be collected;—we are

dying to know what they think of us," observed Mr. Mc Alpine.

"Let us see: Lord Warringdon and Mr. Barham, are English,—Mr. Mc Alpine Irish,—two to one, so I am for the English," Maria said.

"You forget your father and Mr. O'Reilly."

"No, I don't forget them, mamma; but you know they count for nothing;—the one, a married man, the other a man who never will marry:—they are as if they were not."

"I cannot say that I feel extraordinarily flattered by your vote, Miss Wilmot; the preference, as you admit, being merely accidental; and now, for your sister's," Lord Warringdon said, turning to Isabel. "Remember," he added, "that I was for the Irishwomen, so you must, in common gratitude, decide in favour of Englishmen. Now, 'St. George and England,' again, fair Isabel."

"No, no, my lord, you gave the lovely daughters of Erin but half your heart,—but I give them the whole of mine; remember *that*, gentle Isabel, and be sure you decide for St. Patrick and Ireland."

"Silence in the court! do not prejudice the minds of the jury," Maria exclaimed.

"I imitate the laudable example of prudence and impartiality set me by Lord Warringdon. So I am for the English generally, but the Irish particularly," said Isabel, smiling.

"*Maligne que dis tu là?*" Lord Warringdon playfully whispered.

Mr. Mc Alpine rewarded the fair speaker with a look of unutterable tenderness; his large white eyes rolling from side to side, like a ship in a heavy gale of wind, and appearing every moment upon the point of fairly tumbling out, "body and bones," as our friend, Mr. Kelly, would say.

Lady Anne thought fit, just then, to challenge the Viscount to a game at chess, hoping that Mc Alpine's vanity, evidently excited by what he seemed to consider a decided expression of Isabel's preference, might hurry him (if allowed the opportunity) into making his proposals in form, and thus quickening the Viscount's movements. When Lord Warringdon accepted her invitation, she placed the chess-board sufficiently near Mc Alpine and Isabel for him to overhear whatever conversation should pass between them.

The players had scarcely seated themselves, when Mr. Mc Alpine began thus, in a low tone, to Isabel:—

"Yes, you are, indeed, a woman capable of appreciating an Irishman! your preference evinces both sense and taste, such

as I should ever expect to find in the most charming of her sex."

"Oh, I did not mean literally, what I said, Mr. Mc Alpine; I was merely laughing with Lord Warringdon, for I really do not prefer Irishmen."

"You raally do not prefer Irishmen? You are the greatest little rogue in the world!" he said, archly; "as if I did not know what you like better than you do yourself; at laste, better than you pretend," he added, resuming his usual languishing tone. "I am aware that you have too much taste and romance of sentiment, to be interested by an Irishman of the common run; swaggering fellows, ready to fight every man, and make love to every woman they meet. No, my charming Isabel, my sweet modest, shrinking lily of the vale! No, an Irishman of that class could never be the object of a timid and delicate affection such as yours!—But could not my gentle Isabel love a refined and accomplished Irishman?—A man of mind, capable of understanding and appreciating the soft tenderness of her character; one on whom she could lane for support and encouragement; one whose ardour would be tempered with sensibility, and exalted by enthusiasm; one who would repay her devoted attachment with all the intensity of passion, all the elegance of taste, and all the romance of sentiment: one who could brathe (breathe) but in the atmosphere of her presence; one who could live but on her words, and whose sunshine was her smiles.—Could you not love such an Irishman as that, enchanting crature of love and beauty?" he whispered, grinning a smile of mingled sentiment and archness.

"Really, Mr. Mc Alpine, I——"

A look from her mother cut short Isabel's sentence, and she stopped abruptly, colouring, and embarrassed.

Mr. Mc Alpine smiled with complacency on her timid attempt at a disavowal of her love, and proceeded thus:—

"The man on whom you bestowed your first and virgin affections must never have loved before he met you—he may have had passing gallantries, but *none* that need excite an unasy sentiment in your gentle bosom; you must be the first woman he ever raally loved; the first he ever sariously contemplated resigning his liberty to, and committing his honour and pace of mind to; he must be able to say with truth—

"My adorable Isabel—I may have admired others, but I never loved but you—from the first moment I beheld your beauteous form, my fate was saled; for you alone have raalized the romantic idaas and anticipations of my impassioned character; you are the bright, soft dhrame of my soul! the crature of my

imagination; the object of my first, and most passionate aspirations!—Yes! you are, indeed, worthy of being the inspiration of poetic fancy; the chosen of a man of mind. Yet, rich as you are in youth, beauty, accomplishments, elegance, refinement, taste, and mind; of gentle birth, and polished manners, surrounded, in a word by fascinations of every description, I should, however, have escaped the thrawldom of your varied and potent charms, if I had not had rason to believe myself the object of an attachment as enthusiastic on your part as upon mine.

"And what man has the right to spake thus, my own fair Isabel? Is it not Mc Alpine? your adoring, and let me hope, not *un*-adored Mc Alpine?—Oh, for the bliss of hearing from your own soft lips this rapturous confirmation of my hopes!—Ah, do let my longing ears drink in the blushing and modest reluctant avowal of your pure and gentle tenderness!—spake, my soft charmer, though it be but a word, one little yes,—to the man who adores you—or a glance will suffice, for I have long been acquainted with the soft language of your bright eyes."

Each time, that unfortunate Isabel had parted her pretty cherry lips, to convey a decided negative to Mr. Mc Alpine's hopes, she caught a frowning expression on her mother's brow, which had enforced her silence; and under this martyrdom of her patience and feeling:

"You know," continued Mr. Mc Alpine, with a tone and look of melting tenderness. "You know what interpretation, gentlemen, on these occasions, are allowed to put on the silence of ladies. Do you not, my gentle, timid love?"

Isabel could endure it no longer,—she bounded from her seat, throwing down the poker and tongs, and trampling on the lame extremities of her father, Mr. O'Reilly, and two lap dogs, in the precipitation of her retreat from the voice of love.

"What a modest crature!" tenderly soliloquized Mr. Mc Alpine.

"My dear Isabel! do pray look before you," her mother exclaimed.

But the fair fugitive was already at the other side of the door.

"Nay, there she is out into her romantic moonshine,—I know her ways."

"But how very awkward she is sometimes!" Lady Anne continued—"Maria! rub poor little Fido's paw, will you?—I am afraid he is sadly hurt,—'tis your move, my lord."

He moved; and moved wrong.

"Check to your King!" she cried.

He made another move, also a false one.

"Check mate!"—and Lady Anne laughed triumphantly.

"I am so delighted to have beaten you at last!—either I h played better, or you worse, than usual."

Why had the Viscount become so suddenly absent and taciturn! Was he out of sorts, at having been beaten at chess, or was he thinking of Mr. Archer, and the election?

"Maria, I wish that you and O'Reilly would sing something," said Lady Anne.

Her daughter joyfully assented, glad to be relieved for awhile from the trouble of feeding Mr. Barham with good stories.

"What a pleasant girl she is!" the Leicestershire minor observed to the young candidate.

"Very!" he answered, musing.

"Pity she is so ugly, though, is it not?".

"Ugly!" repeated the Viscount, with a stare of astonishment. —"Why, she happens to be one of the prettiest women I have ever seen."

"Indeed! do you think so?"

"Why, who the deuce thinks otherwise," demanded his lordship, with a warmth unusual to him. And he relapsed into his former silence and moodiness, and shortly after left the room; Mr. Barham remaining rooted to the spot, lost in wonderment at Maria Wilmot's being considered by Lord Warringdon as one of the prettiest women he had ever seen.

"Well! I am sure I never should have thought of any one admiring her as a beauty. Her eyes are not bad, I think—and she has good white teeth,—but then her skin is horrid brown; and her mouth so very wide, the widest I ever saw, except Mr. Mc Alpine's.—Perhaps 'tis her figure that he admires, some people like large women, but then she is so *very* stout and short: however, he must be right, I suppose; for I know that he is reckoned a better judge of a horse than any man at Melton."

While thus cogitating, he had placed himself opposite Maria, and remained staring vacantly into her face, during the whole of the time she was singing.

"What on earth can the fool of a boy be thinking of, I wonder!" said to herself the object of his not very flattering ruminations, as she caught his fixed gaze. "A silver penny for your thoughts, Mr. Barham!"

"My thoughts!" he repeated, hesitating and looking more silly even than usual.—"I was not thinking of any thing particular,—I was only just thinking of you and"——

"Much obliged to ye, sir," she interrupted, crossing her hands before her, and dropping a country girl sort of courtesy, "thankee, sir, for your compliment.—Thinking of nothing particular, only of me!"

"Oh, you will kill me, if you make me laugh so, Miss Wilmot, you do make such fun of one. Well, I will tell you really what I was thinking. I was thinking how well you were looking this evening,—so handsome!" I may as well say so, he thought, as Lord Warringdon says that she does.

"Poor, foolish boy! I suppose he is tipsy," Maria muttered. Why, my dear creature, what is come over you this evening? you are grown quite civil."

"But am I not always civil to you, Miss Wilmot? I am sure I intend to be so to you, and every body!"

"There again!—me, and every body, bless the dear man!—His compliments are like Penelope's weaving, for he unsays the last moment what he said the moment before,—so you don't care more for me than you do for any one else in the house?"

"Oh, indeed I do, Miss Wilmot, I like you better, a great deal better, than any of them, I like you more than any body I ever knew, except Father John, what a pity it is that priests cannot marry! he and you would be such a nice match! only he is a little too old for you."

"Oh, not at all, if there were no other difficulty than Father John's age, it would be all very well; I would much sooner marry a man old enough to be my father, than I would a person younger than myself,—I could not bear the idea of that!"

"You are quite right, Miss Wilmot,—I wish that every body thought as you do.—There is Ellen Turner, she was full as old as you, and she wanted greatly to marry me, you know, and a great many other girls too; so you see every body has not such sense as you have, and as for fun, there is nobody like you;—at your ball there was not any girl so droll as you; do you know I was rather disappointed at that night,—first, and foremost, Father John was not there, then no one would dance a jig with me, they were all stiff, and stuck up, like English girls, only they spoke with a brogue, I am sure I never should have taken them to be Irish. Oh, but Miss Wilmot, I had nearly forgotten, you have not told me what you were all laughing at the other day at dinner!"

"I wish to heaven I was once married to him, that I might not be worried in this way, to amuse him."

She laughed, however, and looked the picture of good humour, while she prepared to gratify her persecuting companion.

And now, we will leave her relating her funniest story, and he laughing his noisiest laugh, and see what has become of the other couple of lovers; first, however, giving a passing glance at

Lady Anne, and Mr. Mc Alpine, who are engaged in a low and earnest conversation; he telling her of the mutual tenderness which subsists between her daughter and himself; and she listening, with all the smiling attention of a mother, whose favourite project has been attained.

CHAPTER VI.

id not, indeed, as her mother had conjectured, content
h flying merely from the room which contained Mr.
, but also from the roof which covered him; in truth,
stopped to take breath till she had reached a spot in
s, of late her favourite haunt, because it had been ad-
Lord Warringdon,—and where she had often saun-
him—a pretty little walk, (just affording room for
shrubbery, through which ran a clear, rapid, winding
he sunk, feverish and tired, upon a bank, and sat for
looking up at the moon, and down on the water, as if
me out for no other purpose than to pay them a visit;
however, she aroused from her inaction, and began
and down the narrow path, and talking to herself.
ny hour is come. Warringdon loves me, I am sure—
ufficiently his own master to be able to follow his in-
—and if he be not, what is to become of me?—for
Mc Alpine has actually proposed, my mother will be-
stem of quiet persecution. Oh, do I not know her?
ie is aware full well that my wedding this man will be
ıy burial, she will have no pity on me—no remorse—
nilingly doom me to that most appalling of all horrible
panionship for life with a man my very soul sickens
then, to love another, oh that cruel aggravation! from
I wish," she said, clasping her hands in agony, "I had
ı Warringdon's face!"
!" asked Warringdon, close at her ear.
eamed faintly at beholding near her the very face she
een wishing never to have seen,—and
rd," she said, drawing up her graceful figure, "you
l unwarrantably in thus intruding upon me," and was
of moving away, when stopped by Lord Warringdon.
o," he said, taking her hand, "you must not go till you
wered my question. Why do you wish that you had
n me?"
ıat I was dead!" she cried, bursting into a passion of
struggling to disengage her hand.

"Nay, dear, gentle Isabel, you must not wish to die, but to live—to live for me!" he said, pressing to his lips the fair hand he still continued to retain.

The young Viscount happened to be one of those people who cannot bear to look upon anguish, though they may have little remorse about causing it—he could not therefore contemplate, unmoved, the unostentatious sorrow of a woman who devotedly loved him, and whom he in return also loved, not devotedly, to be sure, but at any rate as well as he could any thing that was not himself.

He had come out to seek her he scarcely knew why, and had found her calling in grief on his name: is it very surprising, then, if, for once in his life, he was guilty of imprudence?

Kind reader, pray imagine half an hour, or thereabouts, spent in assurances of attachment, as sincere for the moment, on the Viscount's part, as on that of his fair companion.

When they returned to the drawing-room, they found Lady Anne and Mr. Mc Alpine still in close chat; and Maria still talking, and Mr. Barham still laughing.

One glance at the daughter told the mother all that had occurred; and her heart bounded, although her face remained calm as usual.

"I am very much obliged to you, my lord, for bringing in that naughty girl of mine. Dear child, you should not walk by moonlight; 'tis very unwholesome, indeed. You will have such a cold to-morrow, my sweet love! Now, my dear girl, I must insist on your going to bed immediately. Mr. Mc Alpine—may I trouble you to touch the bell—I wish to know whether there be a fire in her room. Maria, you look pale, my love, after your dancing last night. Go to your beds, both of you, my sweet girls!"

Need we observe that Lady Anne was anxious to break up the party, that she might have an opportunity of eliciting from his lordship a declaration in form, before he should have had time to sleep off any portion of his present vivid impressions, in the same way she had just succeeded in entrapping Mr. Mc Alpine into promising his vote. By dismissing her daughters, she also disembarrassed herself of Mr. Barham, who ran after Maria, to hear the sequel of her last story; and of Mr. Mc Alpine, who trailed after Isabel, to have "one last look of her he adored," before he retired to rest.

"God bless you! pleasant dreams!" his hostess said, giving him a significant, affectionate nod.

As soon as she found herself alone with the Viscount, Mr. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly being too absorbed in politics to be any restraint on her, she thus opened the attack:—

"Can you keep a secret, my lord? Mr. Mc Alpine has this evening proposed for Isabel;" and her face beamed with maternal joy and tenderness.

"Indeed! and is he accepted?" the Viscount inquired, carelessly.

"Surely!" she replied.

"That is to say, accepted by your ladyship, but not by your ladyship's daughter, I take it."

"Why, how do you know?" she asked with well-feigned alarm.

"Only because, to my knowledge, she has accepted somebody else."

"Somebody else! Impossible, my lord!—who could she prefer to Mr. Mc Alpine?"

"A very inferior person, I certainly must allow," he replied, coolly, "for the object of her preference happens to be my unworthy self."

"You, my lord!—you must surely be jesting. I never was aware that you admired my daughter, or that she was attached to you—you cannot therefore be serious."

The Viscount repeated his assertion.

"I must say then, my lord, that both you and she have placed me in a very awkward situation. As for my daughter, her conduct is most shameful and disingenuous; she has suffered me actually to pledge myself, to Mr. Mc Alpine; what *am* I to say to him?" and she appeared much agitated and displeased.

"Oh, say merely that you and your daughter are of different opinions with respect to his merit; and that the young lady happens to have bad taste, and prefers me,—that's all."

"Early in our acquaintance, if I mistake not, I informed your lordship how my daughter was circumstanced; permit me to add, that you have not acted towards me with the openness my confidence merited."

The Viscount looked at her composedly, but said nothing.

"However," she continued, "I leave my daughter free to decide between her suitors; of course her choice concerns herself more than it does me; all I wish is that she had known her own mind a little sooner, and could have spared me the pain of having to undeceive Mr. Mc Alpine,"—then making as it were an effort to be civil, she added, "I trust that you will not attribute any portion of the regret I feel (and which I do not hesitate to acknowledge,) at the failure of my favourite project, to a want of personal consideration for your lordship. I am perfectly aware how many mothers would rejoice in securing so flattering a connexion for their daughters. But, my lord, recollect that I have

known Mc Alpine from boyhood up to the present moment, and a more noble-minded, amiable being there never breathed! His love for Isabel is absolute idolatry; I could, therefore, have no doubt of his making her happy. Then again, my lord, some little selfishness mingled with my other feelings. I was anxious to have my favourite child settled near me, that I might still watch over her with a mother's care; and should, by any possibility, some slight misunderstanding occur in the young *menage*, I could explain and advise, and dear Mc Alpine would have listened to me with all the deference of a son, for he knows I love him like a son of my own. Poor fellow, what a blow this will be to him! I quite dread to meet him!"

"What a long tiresome story about nothing!" said the Viscount to himself.

"Well, Lady Anne, all I can say, is that I regret to have been the occasion of disturbing such glowing visions of domestic felicity. It is certainly peculiarly unfortunate that you have not been able to inspire your daughter with your enthusiasm for Mr. Mc Alpine. But there is no accounting for the strange fancies of young ladies, sometimes; they do not always see with their mamma's eyes, and so much the worse for themselves; but, my dear Lady Anne, it is twelve o'clock!—time for honest folks like you and me to go to bed.—*Bon soir!*"

His hostess held out her hand to him, with a smile grave, but kind, just the smile in fact which a mother gives the man she accepts, but does not rejoice in, as a son-in-law.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Mc Alpine had been all night dreaming of his Isabel, and was now lying absorbed in blissful anticipations of the happy time when he and the "beloved of his soul," would go sailing about the lake, opposite "the Castle," making love; when the door softly opened, and Tom Landnigan, his own man, made his appearance.

"Is that you, Tom?"

"It is sir, veritably," answered Tom.

"Is Miss Isabel up yet, Tom?"

"She is, sir. I have a bit of a letter she gave me for you, about half an hour ago, sir, but I was loath to disturb you, coming in with it."—

"Ah, that's the way to dale with the women—lave them to themselves, and you see how soon they come running after us! The little rogue is afraid now I am displeased, because I did not follow her out of the room, when she made off from me last night, and thinks to get round me again. My gentle crature, I never could be angry with you, even for a moment," said Mr. Mc Alpine, to himself. "Tom, open the shutters and give me the letter—and fetch me the warm water, till I dress."

Mr. Mc Alpine carried the perfumed missive of "the lady whom he served," to his lips, and then broke the seal.

Instead of "my adored Peter," he was surprised to read, "my valued friend." He looked at the signature; it was Anne, not Isabel Wilmot; but the similarity of hand-writing of the mother and daughter had more than once produced similar mistakes. He, however, read on—

"This is the seventh attempt I have made this morning to address you; I have in vain sought words strong enough to depict my feelings; my affection for you, my indignation against Lord Warringdon, and my surprise and deep displeasure at my daughter's unparalleled duplicity.

"When you first paid your addresses to her, I had reason to believe her ardently, though secretly, attached to you; I, therefore, did all in my power to encourage your attentions. I find, but too late, that I have misled you, that I have deceived you, in

fact, but alas! my noble, confiding young friend, believe me, I was myself deceived, and I regret to add, by my own child."

"On mentioning to Lord Warringdon, in the joy of my heart, last night, the fulfilment of my long cherished hope, namely, the union between you and the dearest of all my children, he acquainted me that my daughter had been for some time engaged to himself; her reluctance, therefore, to answer you a short time before, which we both naturally attributed to mere girlish nonsense and timidity, was, it now appears, occasioned by a consciousness of her unworthy double-dealing conduct by you and myself.

"I have passed a miserable night, and am totally unable this morning to meet you; overpowered as I am by shame and wretchedness.

"Though I may not call you son, continue to regard me as your friend. Allow me to hope that we may yet meet as heretofore, when the present painful impression on our minds shall have worn away. Mean while, my amiable, excellent young friend, accept my fervent prayers for your happiness, and, above all, for your wedded happiness with a woman more worthy your generous and romantic feelings, than, I grieve to say, my misjudging and ungrateful daughter has proved herself to be.

Ever believe me,
Sincerely and affectionately yours,
ANNE WILMOT."

If the fair writer of the epistle found herself, as she states, totally unable to "depict" her own feelings, we may be pardoned if we confess ourselves equally at a loss to describe those of the reader of it. He laid down the letter, and he took it up again; he rubbed his eyes, and he twisted his night-cap from side to side, as he tried to ascertain whether he was sleeping or waking. He, the tender, refined, romantic, intellectual, impassioned, captivating Peter Mc Alpine, rejected! and a paltry, titled man of fashion preferred! His astonishment and indignation knew no bounds. At first, he intended leaving Castle Wilmot before breakfast, and not again meeting the undeserving and ungrateful object of his late adoration; but a few moments' consideration convinced him that a ride of seventeen miles, Irish ones, moreover, fasting, would be an exploit equally disagreeable and unnecessary, seeing there was no reason that because he happened to be a rejected lover, he should also be a starved man—so he decided (wisely as we think,) not only on eating his breakfast, previous to his departure, but even of making as good a one as ever he had done in all his life before, whether in or out of love.

"After all," he soliloquized as he descended the stair-case, "'tis worse for her than for me, a great dale. I have ten thousand a year in actual possession. Warringdon's father may live to make an old man of him, and, main time, he will often be hard run for money; and as for the men themselves, I flatter myself—" and he grinned with much self-complacency, "no one but herself would make the comparison."

He found all the party, with the exception of Lady Anne, and Mr. O'Reilly assembled. Lord Warringdon and Isabel chatting at the window; she looking very pretty, and he, very, very gallant. Maria, as usual, "killing" Mr. Barham.

Mr. Wilmot and his eldest daughter advanced, and shook hands with their guest—and Lord Warringdon and Isabel bowed.

"Where is Lady Anne and Mr. O'Reilly?" he inquired, in his usual tone.

"Mamma is very unwell, indeed," replied Maria; "so much so that she has ordered her breakfast up to her room: and Mr. O'Reilly was sent for express, very early this morning, by one of his parishioners."

"How funny Mr. Mc Alpine must feel!" Barham observed, in a whisper, to Maria, who had just been imparting to him the domestic intelligence of the day: "If I asked somebody to marry me, and she would not have me, I should feel so odd, should not you? but I never intend marrying,—don't you think that I am right, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria assured him that she highly approved his determination.

"I am very glad your sister is going to make such a good match! but I wish he had chosen you instead of her:—should you like to be married, Miss Wilmot?"

"No!" replied Maria.

"Oh, but I wish you were, though;—you would keep such a nice, pleasant house! would you not ask me to it, for the sake of old times, and all the laughing we have had together?"

"Oh, whenever I marry, I intend that you shall consider my house as your home, Mr. Barham!"

"I am sure I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Wilmot. I should so like to be at your house! Now, will you promise me one thing? wherever you are married, will you ask me to your wedding? I would come any distance to it."

"I promise you," replied Maria, holding out her hand to him, "that as sure as I shall be at my own wedding, so sure shall you!"

"Oh! thank you, thank you, Miss Wilmot! I hope it will be soon."

"So do I, from the bottom of my heart!" said Maria to herself.

"What a lot of ham, and chicken, and things, Mr. Mc Alpine is eating," Barham continued; "I never should take him for a rejected lover, should you?"

"Have you any commands, ladies and gentlemen, for Mount Pleasant?" Mr. Mc Alpine inquired: "I shall start from here in an hour's time."

"Oh, you must not go so soon, Mc Alpine; stay with us a little longer," Mr. Wilmot insisted, good-naturedly.

"Thank you, I really cannot. Lord Templemore has been, for some time, extremely pressing with me to go and see him, and I promised him faithfully I would, when I saw him here the other day: what a pleasant, good-humoured man he is! and his daughters I like of all things, particularly Lady Mary; I danced with her at your ball, and I was really extremely interested in her conversation; though not strictly handsome, she is a very stylish-looking girl, and has a great dale of mind;" and he glanced over at Isabel, as much as to say, "you see I don't intend wearing the willow for you."

Lord Templemore had, in fact, for some time, been supposed very desirous of bestowing one of his five frightful daughters on his friend, Mr. Mc Alpine. Hitherto, however, the good Earl's generous intentions had been frustrated by Mr. Mc Alpine's own opposition to the scheme; but now, thanks to Miss Isabel Wilmot's blindness, that obstacle was removed; and Mr. Mc Alpine gallopped from the hall-door of Castle Wilmot with the intention of raising one of Lady Pemberton's to the enviable station of wife to a "man of mind."

And now that the stimulus afforded by Mc Alpine's pretensions no longer existed, Lady Anne began to apprehend that the Viscount's passion might cool; she, therefore, decided on leaving Castle Wilmot, and removing to the assize town, where the candidate would have so much electioneering business on hand, as to leave him no leisure for repentance or *ennui*. It was, therefore settled, that Lord Warringdon, Mr. Barham, the Miss Wilmots, and their mamma, were to set off immediately, leaving Mr. Wilmot ostensibly to send down the freeholders, but we have reason to think that the motive assigned was not the real one; and we believe that the father of the Miss Wilmots was just as anxious to keep out of sight of the High Sheriff as the young ladies were to keep within that of their two English guests.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the evening previous to the day appointed for the opening of the poll, a small group of gentlemen stood at one of the windows of Lord Warringdon's committee-room, looking out on the laughing, shouting good-humoured crowd, assembled in the street below.

"There is not a man of Archer's in town yet," said Malony, one of Lord Warringdon's committee, to another gentleman of his party; "he will never come to the poll,—you will see."

"Oh, I hope he will, though," interrupted Mr. Barham, who was leaning half out of the window, contemplating this noisy scene with infinite glee; "or else I shall lose all the sport, and I may never happen to see another Irish election. What capital fun it must be, to be sure!"

"Ay, faith it is, capital fun, indeed!" observed Mr. Malony. "What do you say, my lord," he continued, addressing the Viscount, "to my having carried a dozen messages, on one election, for Mr. Wilmot, and sending six on my own account? He fought five of his, but all mine apologized,—the blackguards!"

"Oh, what famous fun it must be! I hope in goodness there will be a contest, Mr. Malony, don't you?"

"Why, to say the truth, for my own share, I would desire nothing better, but, of course, on Lord Warringdon's account, I wish there may not be one."

"Oh, what harm would it do him!" Barham asked.

"Why, my dear fellow, do you know the expense of a contested election?"

"Pshaw! what is the use of money, but to amuse oneself? I

am sure I would rather spend it on fun than on any thing else in the world."

"Well, what do you say now, O'Reilly?" Mr. Malony demanded, triumphantly,—"do you still hold out that there will be a contest?"

"Yes, for Archer's friends speak as resolutely as ever."

"Pooh! they may bluster, but, take my word for it, they will never come to the poll. Hav'n't we all the great interests of the county? and which have they? not even Mc Alpine's."

"Don't be too sure of him, I advise you; Archer has been for the last week at Mount Pleasant, tampering, you will find, with Lord Templemore, and talking over Mc Alpine."

"Talking over the devil, man!" exclaimed Malony, impatiently,—"how can he go in the teeth of his promise?—did he not tell Lady Anne and Mr. Wilmot, his and their interest should go together?"

"And would this be the first time of his saying one thing and doing another? Don't you know he is an eel, that can wriggle himself out of the closest tied and most elaborately constructed knot, ever devised by the ingenuity of man?—more particularly on this occasion, that he has wounded feelings to talk about."

"Ha, ha, ha!—the deuce mend him! Isabel Wilmot served him right, cursed, prosing fool! but no matter for that, he promised, and there's an end of it;—he can't—he dare not—go back at it. If he owes you a grudge," Mr. Malony continued, turning to Lord Warringdon, "in the name of heaven, why does he not call you out, and shoot you at once;—that would be a handsome, gentlemanlike way of settling the business. But, curse it! to break one's promise to a man, because he and you happened to like the same girl, and she chose you rather than him,—*that* would be confounded shabby!—I tell you what, my lord, if I had been in his place, I would have shot you as dead as a door nail; but I would have voted for you all the same, because I promised."

"Ha, ha, ha! bravo, paddy! shoot him first, and vote for him afterwards! Oh, what a capital bull!" shouted Barham, clapping Malony on the back.

"I did not say so, man," Malony replied, rather sulkily.

"Oh you did! you positively did! 'I'd have shot you as dead as a door nail, but I would have voted for you all the same,'—those were your very words; oh, 'tis a regular bull!" and Barham rubbed his hands, with delight.

"It is no bull at all, I tell you," insisted Mr. Malony. "Pray,

ht I not shoot him, and vote for him, at the same time?—
him first, of course, and shoot him afterwards. You
ıt take a man up till he is down, my good fellow."
ɔut you *were* down! the way you say it now is not the
said it at first,—no, no! that's no go. It was a regular
there's no use in denying it. I hope I sha'n't forget to
Miss Wilmot,—what fun we shall have!"
› a friend's advice, and make fun of something else,"
Malony, slowly and emphatically.
't see why I may not laugh at you, as well as any body
Malony?"
must not, if I bid you not."
ɣes, I shall, though," Barham insisted, with boyish obsti-

you once more, that I advise you not," said Mr. Malo-
ng very dark.
ɔse I don't chopse to take your advice, what then?" que-
ıam.
then I will shew an English ass what he gets by med-
h an Irish bull!" and the tall and formidable Mr. Malony
ıis broad shoulders, and scowled from beneath his heavy
ɔws, at the simple wilful boy.
ɪnglish ass!" cried Barham, his smooth, almost childish,
ying, as well as it was able, the menacing looks of his
ɪt: "how dare you call me an English ass?" and his hand
d to suit the action to the words, when his arm was ar-
Mr. O'Reilly.
ense, Barham, he did not mean it—it was only a jest."
ɪt! no, no,—I am not quite greenhorn enough to be made
ıat a thing is a jest which is not one. Thank you, Mr.
not quite ass enough for that!—Let me go, I say!" and
ɪtruggled violently, though ineffectually, in O'Reilly's

ny," said the young priest, who, by virtue of the sanctity
fession, might venture to approach the tiger in his wrath;
ırth while to quarrel with a friend for a foolish word?—
may take a jest,—come; say that you are sorry for the
ns you made use of, and shake hands,—Malony!"
)'Reilly, mind your own business, if you please, and don't
ɪself any trouble about mine," Mr. Malony replied.
ne go, let me go!" Barham still continued to vociferate,
to give him his answer."
what might that answer be?" demanded Mr. Malony.
ɔch into your face!" roared Mr. Barham.
we are quits then!" replied Malony, tossing his glove

to Barham. "Any one that wants me," he added, looking at the young Englishman, "will find me at Costelloe's hotel. Good morning to you, gentlemen!" and he stalked out of the room very like an angry turkey-cock.

"You have done a very silly thing, Barham," said O'Reilly, "to think of quarrelling with the greatest fire-eater in the county, for the sake of a stupid jest; I wish you had not said what you did about the blow, and we might have got you out of it, after all!"

"And pray how do you know, Mr. O'Reilly, that I wanted you to get me out of it?—do you think I am afraid of him?—no,—nor wouldn't if he was twice as big and as savage as he is.—I don't care one straw about himself, or his fire-eating, I can tell him. Oh, Lord Warringdon, we are both English,—will you then be my friend, and take a message for me to him?"

"Why, I should indeed be most happy to oblige you, my dear Barham," replied his lordship, "but you are aware that Mr. Malony is one of my most zealous and efficient electioneering friends; so that I could not possibly act against him."

"Oh, very well, I must only do the best I can;" and Barham sallied forth in quest of a friend, (a friend?) to arrange preliminaries for getting himself shot, or making him shoot another person as soon as possible.

"I must go immediately, and have them bound over," said O'Reilly.

"Do, for pity's sake!" replied the Viscount, "it would be a cursed nuisance, indeed," he added, as the door closed after O'Reilly, and he was left alone, "if this Malony should be shot; it would place me in a very ticklish position with regard to my election. Confound the pair of them, they deserve to be both shot for their folly!" and his lordship looked over his memorandum book, to see how many remained on his lists, to be conciliated,—and how, and why—

CHAPTER IX.

"Did ye hear the report, Miss Maria?" asked Pat Murphy, the following morning after he had in vain fidgetted about the room, in hopes of exciting her attention, or that of Lady Anne.

"No, what report, Pat?"

"The one, Miss, about Mr. Barham and Mr. Malony."

"Why, what has happened to them?"

"A terrible thing, Miss—'twas Jim Naughten tould me, an' he has a good right to know, wherein, 'twas himsel' that dhruve him—he couldn't think what in the world was the matther whin Misther Costelloe called him out of his sleep this morning, and says he to him, Jim, says he—"

"Oh, never mind, Pat," interrupted Maria, "what Mister Costelloe said to Jim, only tell us at once what Jim said to you."

"Sure, Miss, that's what I'm doin'—all I'm tellin' you is what Jim tould me."

"'Jim,' says Misther Costelloe, 'get up this minute, an' dhrive as fast as if the divil was at your heels, to the barracks, for Misther Barham that's goin' to fight a duel with Mr. Molony, beyant at Kilmore, at break o' day."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Lady Anne, "Barham gone to fight with Malony! 'Tis all over with us, my dear Maria," she added, in a low voice; "and after all the trouble we have had! It is really too provoking."

"Bad enough," replied Maria, in the same tone; "however, you know all is not always lost that is in danger. Come, Pat, finish your story, and as quickly as you can."

"I will, Miss."

"By the powers, then, says Jim, I'm goin' to dhrive a man I'll niver dhrive agin any how, the crature, if it's wid Mr. Malony he's goin' to fight, Misther Costelloe; for he's the divil itsel' wid the pistuls, the greatest fire-ater in the Province, barrin' the masther."

"Och, Jim," says Mr. Costelloe, "who is there we'd think of comparing with Mr. Wilmot, in regard of fire-ating; he's the wondher of Ireland, not to talk of the Province, Jim."

"You never seen a man, mee lady, fondher of another than what Mr. Costelloe is of the masther;—and good right he has, troth;—isn't it the masther made him what he is? and Mrs. Costelloe fondher agin, an'—"

"Oh yes, Im sure they are, Pat, as fond as possible of my father, and we are greatly obliged to them, but go on, and tell us what has become of Mr. Barham," interrupted Maria, rather impatiently.

"Well, Miss, Jim got up, and dhruve Mr. Barham, and his second, Capt. Williams, the fine cliver-looking gentleman that was up at the Castle the night of the ball, you remember, Miss! an Englishman, with big whiskers. Well, Father O'Reilly thought to bind 'em over, an' sint to Costelloe's to thry and catch 'em; but, faith, Misther Malony was too many for him; and he hid himsel' and Misther Barham between the matthrasses of one of the beds, and there they were suffocating, an' afeard o' their lives they'd be nabbed, but by great good look they warn't; not but, indeed, Misther Barham a'most ruined it all by his foolishness, laughin' so, you'd think the life would lave him, shakin' undher the bed, an' Misther Malony fit to be tied, he was so mad wid him, but not darin' to spake, for fear would the peace officers hear him. Well, as soon as they wint, he made Misther Barham go sleep at the barracks, to be out of harum's way, an' he wint himsel' to a frind of his at Kilmore, to be on the spot airly."

"Well, and how are they both now, Pat?" demanded both ladies at once, taking advantage of the narrator's stopping to draw his breath.

"Faith, mee Lady, badly enough. Misther Malony is kilt as dead as a herring, and Misther Barham is lying, not expected to live, at a small public house Father O'Reilly brought him to."

"Heavenly Powers!" exclaimed Lady Anne.

"I never believe half what I hear," observed Maria. "What was the quarrel about, Pat?"

"About a lady, Miss."

"A lady!" cried Maria, "what lady?"

"Pat, order the carriage! I will see O'Reilly immediately; that is the only way of ascertaining the truth of the story."

"If he should die?" said Lady Anne.

"It would be a bad business," answered Maria.

"Deplorable, indeed!" sighed Lady Anne.

She stepped into her carriage, and drove off.

ıtreets were thronged with Castle Wilmot freeholders
ıg, and shouting "Warringdon for ever,"—Jim Naugh-
ɔort of the English lord's generosity, and of his being
ry perticklar, the thruth of a gintleman," (in support of
ssertion, the compliment of the five pound note was not
n,) had already secured him an overwhelming majority
ıbrivers, butchers, grocers, and butchers' and grocers'
aiters, ostlers, carmen, beggars, and such like gentry of
ɔ—and Jim was now flying about in all directions, wav-
hat, and jumping over his stick, collecting his boys, and
ıg them for the honour of God, and of their town, to be
l break the head of every Archer, who should dare shew
in their free, loyal, and religious streets.

might be seen groups of gentlemen, gesticulating, and
ıg one another's shoulders, in their eagerness to prove,
hundredth time, a position already admitted as incontro-
; viz., the superior wisdom, valour, and social import-
every individual composing the party to which they
d, and of the consequent certainty of their triumph. A
ırther on might be observed some member of the Ro-
atholic priesthood, more quietly, but not less zealously,
ıing as attentive audience on the liberal and enlightened
es of the Right Honourable Viscount, who was pro-
by them, and admitted by their listeners, to be an hon-
England, and anticipated as a blessing to Ireland.

were the female part of the population indifferent specta-
the preparations for the approaching struggle, which en-
their husbands, fathers, lovers, brothers, or friends;
ıey were, elbowing, scolding, and all but shooting who-
ɜsumed to gainsay their fiat, that Lord Warringdon, and
ıt he, should be returned for their town.

ladies being among his most zealous advocates,—first,
ɔ he was *not* an Orangeman; and, secondly, because he
ung and handsome:—the old ones might be seen hurry-
ɔhapel to pray for him, while the young ones, sauntering
down the square, listening to the band, or standing look-
t at window, flirted for him; exhorting those already
ɜnds, confirming the vacillating, and endeavouring, by
or poutings, to cajole, or frighten, his declared enemies,
ling to some, almost embracing others; and how could
ɔ less for so handsome, so gallant a candidate, who had
ball at the assembly-rooms, and had danced with "every
consequence" in the room? Besides, he had such beau-
rk eyes, and he made such an elegant bow, and another

besides, which they did not, however, add, but which we will do for them,—"Besides, he had all the dashing young men of the county on his side!"

Nor were the females of lower degree less energetic in his behalf, groups of them were gathered round the shop doors, or hall doors, insisting to one another, and all of the worthier gender (*soi disant*,) they could get to listen to them, "that it would be a murther outright, a mortal sin, troth it would, to disappoint such a darlin', purty, free-spoken, free-givin' gintleman, the frind and son-in-law to be of misther Wilmot, the Lord prosper and purtect him!"

We say that all this "*might* be seen," but we do not take upon ourselves to assert that Lady Anne observed all, or, indeed, any of the bustling, good-humoured, lively scenes passing around her, so completely was her interest in Warringdon's election lost in her fears for Barham's life.

She was roused from her somewhat unpleasant reflections, by loud and vehement shouts of welcome, from the mob of the town, and "loyal" and affectionate greetings from the Castle Wilmot tenantry, when they recognized the carriage, as Bartly Kilfoy tried to steer it through the dense mass of human beings, which encumbered its progress without overturning it or crushing them.

"High for her ladyship! high for the master! hurrah for the English lord! Warringdon for ever! Wilmot for ever! success to them, and the divil's curse to their inemies!" and various other equally "neat and appropriate" expressions of zeal and attachment, were poured forth in chorus from hundreds of rough throats.

"Whisht, boys, whisht! and God bless ye!" cried Bartly Kilfoy, "or ye'll frighten the horses!"

"Frightin 'em! is it the Castle Wilmot horses to be frightened at the boys hurrahing for their master? faith, they have a good right to be used to it, by this time, any how."

But the Castle Wilmot horses, like some ladies, were capricious animals, and chose, despite of the good reason just adduced, to be nervous and agitated, so they began to plunge, and lash, Bartley Kilfoy to coax and curse by turns, and Lady Anne to scream.

"Never fear, my lady, never fear!" cried the wild crowd, around her. "Take them stupid bastes off, Bartly, and we'll dhraw her ladyship ourselves."

And now a violent contest ensued between "her own boys," as they called themselves, and "the boys of the town," for the

honour of drawing her. And while they roared, and cursed, and shouldered one another, the unfortunate victim of their gallant contention was knocked from side to side of the disputed vehicle, till she lay exhausted, scarcely able even to shriek out to them, to "keep the peace."

"Oh-we will, me lady, and why not? sure arn't we paceable? quite paceable—get out o' that ye vagabones, and don't be frightening her ladyship! what call have ye to her at all? we are her own boys—glory be to God, and knows how she ought to be thrated."

"An' isn't she in our town? 'tis we that has the best right to her—so be off this moment, or we'll make ye—be off, ye sheep-stalers?" vociferated the boys of the town.

"Ye bred and born murdhering villains, how dare ye call us that?" roared the insulted Castle Wilmots—and up flew hundreds of shillelaghs, and off flew hundreds of hats, as the said shillelaghs descended, accompanied by yells and execrations, such as none but Irishmen can utter, and which poor Lady Anne listened to in an agony of terror.

Just at that moment Mr. O'Reilly appeared; flung himself in the midst of the crowd, and down went the sticks at once.

"'Tis our own town, you know, father O'Reilly!" one party submissively represented.

"We are her own boys:" expostulated the others.

"I am ashamed of ye all, town and country;" answered the young priest, "gather up your sticks and hats, you quarrelsome, good for nothing fellows, and begone! a pretty way, indeed, of shewing your respect for a lady, to frighten her out of her senses—I am ashamed of ye!"

"My dear O'Reilly," said Lady Anne, "I have been in search of you for the last hour, to hear something about unfortunate Barham; he is mortally wounded, I understand."

"Oh no! no such thing—'tis a mere flesh wound, and he will be as well as ever, in a day or two."

"Thank God!" piously ejaculated Lady Anne.

"But," he continued, "poor Molony's arm is broken."

"Oh, only that! I heard that he was killed;" Lady Anne replied with indifference. "But, tell me, was the quarrel about a lady?"

O'Reilly laughed—"Make your mind easy, on that head! no—the dispute was about a bull, not a lady. By the way, Barham, with all his folly and foolishness, is a fine fellow: you will not have to find the courage, as well as sense, of the *me-*

nage, and that is some comfort. I am glad, more glad than I can tell, that at least, in that respect, he is not unworthy of Maria Wilmot; not utterly contemptible; still it is a terrible sacrifice!"

"Nonsense, my dear O'Reilly—sixteen thousand a year may reconcile any woman to a fool—and I am very sorry I cannot add another epithet—for the more courage he has, the more difficult it will be to manage him—I shall never be able to frighten him, I fear."

O'Reilly shrugged his shoulders, sighed, and jumped into the carriage, and they proceeded to the court-house.

To their astonishment, the first person they saw on reaching the hustings, was Barham, pushing a way for himself, and his late antagonist, who was shouting with pain and enthusiasm.

"For heaven's sake, Molony, how could you be mad enough to come here with a broken arm?" asked O'Reilly, who had run after the duellists of the morning, and bosom-friends of midday.

"What matter about it? I wanted to see the sport; I was going mad there at Costelloe's, listening to the hurrahing, and I, in bed, having nothing to do with it. I begged the doctor, and people for God sake to let me come, but they wouldn't—so I waited awhile, and presently they all set off here, and left me—and then I got up softly and went to Barham's room, to ask him to help me on with my clothes, and there I found him dressing too, so we agreed to come away together—we nicked them, didn't we Barham?"

"I think," observed O'Reilly smiling, "that you will find yourself 'nicked' into a fever-a-piece for this exploit."

"Capital fun!" exclaimed Barham, "do you know, Malony, I was just thinking how droll it is that you and I should be here such good friends, arm in arm, after what happened this morning?"

"Oh, not at all, my dear fellow—you are often ten times better friends than ever with a man after fighting him; that is to say, if you don't happen to kill him, you know—it brings you acquainted with a man at once—you see directly what he is made of—now for instance, only for that little misunderstanding between us, I might never have liked you, or respected you as I do at present; for now I see you are a stout fellow, as well as a right good-natured one, and a devilish good shot, into the bargain, and I assure you I am uncommonly glad I did not kill you this morning."

ıank you, I am very much obliged to you, Molony, for
ır good-nature—and believe me, the regard is mutual,"
ed Barham, grasping the hand of his companion.—
sten, listen," cried O'Reilley, "Warringdon is going to
"

will not, however, trouble our readers with a detail of
lship's harangue; we think it sufficient to state that it
ed the usual common-places, about himself and his con-
cy, profession of devotion to their interests, praise of him-
ıd abuse of his opponent, to be found in all public dis-
f the same nature, throughout the united Empire, with
lition, in this case, of much vehement and energetic de-
on in favour of civil and religious liberty, and assurances
ardent zeal in the "great cause."

ɔration was received with loud acclamation, and cries of
ingdon for ever! The true friend of Ireland and the
no double daling in him! but comes to the point at
nd spakes his mind plainly."

Archer then came forward, and was received with groans,
ses, not a few, cries of "Down with the orangeman!
with the black protestant! that wants to keep all the
and fishes to himself! and down with the thraitors and
that support him! to the divil wid them all!"

show of hands was declared, by the High Sheriff, to be
ır of Viscount Warringdon. But Mr. Archer's friends
led a poll; and accordingly, a man was polled on each
ıd the court-house was soon after cleared of its noisy
ıts, both parties talking big of their hopes of the morrow,
he "battle" was to begin in earnest.

CHAPTER X.

The eventful morning came, and the whole town was alive at the dawn of day; crowds of partizans of all ages and ranks gathering round the committee-rooms of the opposing candidates; electioneering agents, oratorizing, explaining, or mystifying, as suited their purpose; looking over certificates, and "making Pat Conny sinsible he was only to be Pat Conny the first time he voted, but Dennis Sleevan, the second time, in regard of poor Dennis not being convanient just then, because he was berried last week; and reminding Martin Donovan, he musn't forget to slip a flea inside his lase, that he might swear with a safe conscience, that the life in it was still in existence," and other trifling, though necessary, arrangements, for the proper carrying on of their employer's interests; and voters were eating, drinking, shouting, laughing, and whirling their ferrals to give them "the raal fighting touch," and among the noisiest of the noisy, as in duty bound, were the Castle Wilmot boys, who strove hard, by all the means in their power, to keep up the honour of "the family," and make as much riot as possible.

"Which of you has seen or heard any thing of McAlpine?" demanded Mr. Malony, as he entered Lord Warringdon's committee-room, his face flushed from pain and impatience.

"Still at Mount Pleasant, I suppose," replied one of the group he addressed.

"Still at Mount Pleasant! confound him! what is he doing there?"

"Making love to Lady Mary Pemberton, I hear."

"Making love to the devil, man!—why isn't he here? who ever heard of a man leaving his freeholders to themselves in this way? how can he tell who they vote for when he's not on the spot? Making love indeed! the bletherem skite of a fellow! always bothering some woman or other with his cursed poetry, or romance, and she wishing him at the devil all the while, for

his pains. I bring up my men myself, my Lord; I take care that nobody dare meddle with a freeholder of mine, or I'd put a bullet through his head, and distrain every beast belonging to the tenant who dared even to think of voting according to his own vagaries. Making love, indeed—the numbskull!"

Mr. Malony's invective against the romantic Mr. McAlpine was cut short by Father John Molloy's entrance, looking as if he were the bearer of portentous information. Lord Warringdon advanced, and shook hands most cordially with "his kind and excellent friend, Mr. Molloy."

"My lord, I am credibly informed that there's a batch of Mc Alpines in town, along with Archer's men!" and the worthy priest accompanied this startling intelligence with an ominous shake of the head.

"Pooh! pooh! Father John: 'tis impossible," Malony interrupted. "Is it the McAlpine servants who are at rack-rents, and dare not call their souls their own? Do you think they would have the courage to vote against his orders? not they."

"But, Mr. Malony, what do you say, if 'tis by his orders they are voting?"

"Do you suppose he wants to have cold lead lodged in his brains?" quietly demanded, in his turn, Mr. Malony.

"But, my dear sir, have you ascertained that Mr. McAlpine *has* sent down his men for Mr. Archer?" queried the Viscount.

"Why, my Lord, I have it on good authority that he has. A sister of Pat Sullivan's wife (Mr. McAlpine's foster-brother, you know, Mr. Malony) told Mrs. Mc Donogh's daughter's husband, a first cousin of her own, and nurse to Mr. Wilmot, that Mr. McAlpine's agent, Misther Fahy, had sent back orders to Pat Sullivan, for all the men, them that lived by the say-side, and them that did not, to come down by wather, unknownst, for fear would any of the Castle Wilmots murdher 'em, if they come by the road; but to take care for his life would Pat Sullivan let on, 'twas his masther that bid him."

Here "Rascal, scoundrel, blackguard, liar, coward," and other synonymous and equally euphonious epithets arose from all parts of the room, coupled with the name of Peter McAlpine of McAlpine castle.

"The only way in the world is to send him a message at once," observed Mr. Malony. "Here, my Lord, sit down, I'll get you a pen and ink in a minute;—now for it!" he cried, clapping the table with the only hand he had at liberty.

"Now for it!" echoed all the bye-standers.

"The cannibals!" muttered the Viscount. "But," he added,

aloud, "before I send Mr. McAlpine a message, I think we should have better authority than that of foster-brothers and nurses. How can we tell whether one word of this story be true? My respected friend here, Mr. Molloy, does not give it on his own authority, or it would, of course, be conclusive."

"Oh, well,—may be so," Mr. Malony reluctantly acquiesced. "However," he added, "you may as well write the letter, my Lord, to have it ready to send when we want it, for I dare say, before the election is over, he will be playing us a trick, and then we have our challenge written, and nothing to do but to dash it off; and even if we shouldn't want it for him, we shall for somebody else; with a few alterations, you know, the same copy will serve for a dozen different people."

Lord Warringdon did not much relish the idea of an assortment of ready-made challenges, but, however, he was too prudent to object to the proposal; and, in a very few minutes, a letter full of flogging, posting, and shooting, dictated by Mr. Malony, and penned by his lordship, was read aloud, to the great delight and admiration of the company at large.

"Do you know, I am in great hopes that you will have to fight McAlpine: it would make you so popular with the mob! for the fighting candidate has always the best chance, you know, of being the sitting member. I assure you, Mr. Wilmot would not have kept the county so long, but for his handiness with the pistols. He fought four men one morning before breakfast, and wounded them all,—don't you remember, O'Leary?" Mr. Malony added, turning to the electioneering agent, *en chef*.

"Aye, faith, Mr. Malony, but he was left for dead himself, you recollect."

"I know he was; but what does that signify? he gained his return by it, and never would else; for the opposite party, by bribing, and tricking, and telling lies, of one kind or other, had contrived to get eight hundred ahead of us, and we had but three days left to pull up. Well, my Lord, the mob got outrageous when they heard Mr. Wilmot was badly wounded, and they threatened to burn the town, if he died without being elected. In all your life you never saw such a row; the women running about screeching, and clapping their hands, and swearing they'd have the lives of them that took his; the men shouting, and cursing like mad. I had my skull fractured by the way, but only in a mistake, you know; the poor fellows took me for somebody else."

"Pleasant mistake!" thought his lordship.

"Well, Mr. Malony, and how did it all end?"

"Oh, as well as possible, my lord: the army was called out, but the Colonel was a friend of ours, and behaved very handsomely, so we beat the other party fairly out of the town, and Mr. Wilmot was elected that very day."

"Mr. Malony, I beg pardon for interrupting you," said Father John; "hadn't we better see after them McAlpines; they'll slip through our fingers else. I was thinking of going myself into the —— booth, to watch them as they come in, and know the truth at once."

This idea met universal approbation, and accordingly Father John hurried to the —— booth, the strong-hold of the McAlpine interest.

A batch of the suspected freeholders had arrived before him, and a ragged, half-starved, miserable-looking creature, was now undergoing the usual interrogatives by the deputy assessors.

"Who do I vote for, is it? I vote for —— for, —— by my conscience, then, I can't remember the name just at this present minute. Misther Fahy, Misther Fahy! which of 'em is it you tould me to vote for?" demanded the puzzled freeholder, in a stage-whisper.

"Archer. Hav'nt I been able to bate that into your head yet, ye omadhoun?" inquired, in his turn, Mr. McAlpine's confidential man of business.

"Omadhoun! Mister Fahy!" repeated the voter: "faith an' the 'cutest boy in the county 'ud be bothered when he's never tould two days runnin' the same thing:—one time I'm to vote for the English Lord; then I am'nt, but it's for Misther Archer I'm to wote, how are we to know what's wanting of us at all?"

This dialogue excited shouts of jeering laughter from the Warringdon party, and cries of "Success to ye! your scholar does you credit Misther Fahy! he's a nate boy at his A, B, C."

"Silence!" cried the deputy assessor. "Your vote, my honest man."

"Archer! why don't you spake out at onst, ye ohnshuch?" whispered Mr. Fahy, angrily, in the ear of his very stupid, and now somewhat sulky, pupil.

"Oh, it's for the English lord he's goin' to vote," loudly and scoffingly laughed the Warringdons.

"By the powers! then, it isn't. I'll wote for neither of 'em; —but for my own masther, Mr. McAlpine, and nobody else," replied the persecuted and displeased freeholder.

"Mr. McAlpine is not a candidate, my honest man," replied the deputy assessor.

"Well, for Miss Kitty, then!"

This answer was received with shouts of laughter by Warringdons, and with muttered curses by the Archers.

"Ladies are never elected to serve in parliament, my honest man. You must, therefore, take your choice of the three candidates in question, Viscount Warringdon, Mr Fitzgerald, and Mr. Archer; and make up your mind at once, if you please, for you are stopping the poll all this time."

"Faith! an' with the blessing of God, I won't stop it any longer," and the indignant voter suddenly turned round and took to his heels.

He was succeeded by another of the batch, who got through his lesson more creditable to himself, and Mr. Fahy.

"My blessing to ye, Phanick O'Dea!" said Father John, "how long is it sence you turned Protestant?"

"Me turn Protestan', is it, Father John! The Lord save us!" And Phanick crossed himself reverentially. "Sure I'm no Protestan', nor one belongin' to me; the heavens betwixt us an' harum!"

"If you arn't a protestant, and a bitther black one, too, how do ye come to vote for the orange candidate, my man?"

"Avoch, Father John, sure it isn't of our own will we're voting! didn't Pat Sullivan threaten to burn the houses over our heads and banish us the place, if we didn't wote the way we were ordhered? An' how would we stand the counthry, Father John, if we didn't? always in arrares of rint, you know."

"But, Phanick, didn't your Masther promise the English Lord; how can he go back of that, now?"

Phanick twisted his hat between his fingers, shifted from one leg to the other, was silent a moment.

"It isn't for the likes of us, you know, your Reverence, to be faulting him, whatever he'd do: sure he'd sweep us off the face of the earth if we didn't do his biddin!"

"But do ye know it is his biddin', Phanick?"

"Sure if it wasn't, would Pat Sullivan be goin' on the way he was, sthrivin' to get us down, and threatnin' our lives, if we wouldn't be said by him?"

"Michelleen! Mavourneen! are ye there?" Father John cried, turning towards the crowd of Castle Wilmot freeholders and idlers, who crowded the booth.

The same little bare-legged, red-headed boy, already introduced to our readers, obeyed the summons, and, after having

performed his customary *salam* of pulling forward his hair, and ing his foot, awaited deferentially the priest's commands.

Michelleen, be off this minute, as fast as ye can set fut to the ground, to Lord Warringdon's committee-room, and——"

And Michelleen was galloping off, when recalled by Father John.

"Come back, ye little omadhoun! is it goin' ye are without knowin' what it is ye are goin' for?" He continued,—"go to the committee-room, and tell Mr. Malony I want to spake to him immediately;—now away with ye, my man!"

In a few minutes Michelleen re-appeared, ushering in Mr. Malony.

"Well, Father John, what is it?"

"Which of us was right about McAlpine? here are his men votin' for Archer, and by his orders, as I have found out by one of 'themselves.'"

"Ha! I wouldn't doubt him, the slippery rascal!" exclaimed Mr. Malony. "Where in the world did I leave the challenge?" he continued, searching his pockets. "Oh, I forgot, it is in the committee-room. Michelleen! run and tell Mr. O'Leary to get an express ready directly for Mount Pleasant, and to send him after me to Lord Warringdon's committee-room. The only way to deal with such a fellow as McAlpine is to frighten him, Father John; or, if he is not to be frightened, shoot him like a dog."

CHAPTER XI.

The answer to the hostile message arrived in due course, and was as follows:—

My Lord,

You appear to me to have made an extraordinary mistake, for I am under no promise to support you, nor ever was; you must remember I always declined engaging myself. It is true that I have declared my intention of voting for you, but I never bound myself by a distinct promise. A declaration is one thing,—a promise another. Such being the state of the case between us, I have promised to support Mr. Archer, and cannot see how, in so doing, I deserve the imputation contained

in your lordship's favour, received this day, of "dishonourable conduct." However, as you have been led, as you say, to depend upon my support, I will manage thus:—I give my personal vote (as I have promised) to Mr. Archer, and my people I leave to themselves.

I have the honour to remain, &c."

"It is all right, you see," observed the young Viscount, not sorry to be rid of a pistolling match, to his friends assembled in full divan.

"All right, my Lord! all right? any thing but that;—all wrong, you mean!" exclaimed Mr. Malony.

"Why, does he not leave his men to themselves? and is not that just what we wanted?" asked the candidate.

"Oh, the schemer! doesn't he know well they dare not go against his orders, already given? And the poltroon won't fight! you see how he backs out of that! I don't know what we are to do with him, at all," said Mr. Malony, rather despondingly.

"Never mind now, don't be one bit unasy," interposed Father John; "but give me the letter, and I'll go among the tenants. Lave McAlpine with me Mr. Malony, and I'll settle him, I promise you."

And now what had been only noise and confusion, became wild tumult, and deafening roar. The freed freeholders of the McAlpine estate, found their newly accorded liberty of thinking and acting for themselves a perilous as well as puzzling privilege; beset on one side by Father John's eloquence, and the Warringdon shillelagh; and on the other, by Mr. Archer's money, and fear of their master.

"Do you want to deny your religion, ye unfortunate misguided cratures?" Father John cried, "oh that ever I should live to see a man of my flock voting for an orange candidate and protestant ascendancy; and the downfall of their own ancient thrue and holy religion! and when I'll be witness agin ye at the last day, that I warned ye, but that ye wouldn't give heed to me; how will it be with ye then, boys?"

"Avoch, Father John, bad enough! sure we'd be said by you afore the world, and why not only for the masther, but Father John? Oh! if we displase him, how will it be with us at all, and our long wake little families?"

"But don't ye see his writing, boys?—what more would ye have! sure he laves you to plaze yourselves,—doesn't he, my men?"

His auditors, however, still hesitated.

"If he shouldn't mane what he says, Father John?"

"Och, is it making a liar of your masther ye are?" queried the orator with a half laugh.

"God help us!" they groaned; "well, Father John, we'll do your bidden, and vote for the English Lord."

"Do at your peril!" would say Mr. Fahy; "do, and I'll dhrive every mother son of ye, not a baste ye haye, that shan't be in the pound twenty-four hours after you give that vote."

"Ohra, murdher! what's to become of us at all!" cried the poor trembling wretches.

And then an electioneering agent for Archer would whisper, "A couple of pounds a head boys, an' the best of ating an' drinking, what do ye say to that?"

"Which way do ye wote, ye vellians of the world?" the Jim Naughten's boys, and the Castle Wilmot's would roar, whirling their "ferrals."

"For ye, for ye!" they cried, more influenced by the dread of hell-fire in prospect, and of a sound drubbing at the moment, than by love of money, or even fear of being made houseless.

"Success to ye! glory to ye! hurrah for the thrue and staunch friends of their religion; high for the McAlpines!" the Warringdon's shouted.

"Ye impident blackguards! ye shall pay for this,—take my word for it, every identical man o' ye!" the infuriated agent vociferated. And, perceiving some signs of vacillation of purpose in the crowd, he added:

"If there are any among ye will stand by their masther and their cabins, and the bastes, and their children, let 'em come over to my side!"

A few answered the appeal.

"Ah the renegades! the apostates! the vellains;" the Castle Wilmots howled, as they rushed on the small and terrified band.

The yells and shrieks became so appalling, and there occurred so many bleeding heads and fractured fingers, that the military were called out, to restore order; and indeed, after shooting two or three, and wounding twice as many more, the military partially succeeded in this object.

But the McAlpines took advantage of the general confusion, "to slip away unknown," and return quietly to their own homes, leaving the Archers and Warringdons, to dispute as to whom they by right belonged: and great was the astonishment and indignation of both parties, when they discovered the absence of the objects of their contention.

The Warringdons did not, however, take any step to bring back the fugitives, inasmuch as their previous anxiety to gain them had been prompted rather by a desire to detach them from Archer (who had no chance of succeeding but through the McAlpine interest) than by any want of an accession of voters.

But the Archers were determined not to resign, without a struggle, their only hope; so a deputation of gentlemen of that party, immediately set off in pursuit of the flying freeholders, escorted by a detachment of military to protect them through "the enemy's country."

They overtook the run-a-ways not far from a village on the Castle Wilmot estate; and first they tried persuasion, then threats; and were proceeding to blows, when the McAlpines ran for refuge into the village, and the Archer gentlemen knowing that its male inhabitants were absent at the election, fearlessly pursued them to their retreat, and had already managed to secure a dozen of the less fleet-footed of the poor fellows, when, to their surprise, yells and execrations rose on all sides, and presently there issued from each house, a shrieking, cursing fury, with her dark hair hanging about her shoulders, and her apron full of stones.

"Bad luck to ye, souls an' bodies! how dare ye come next or nigh us! d'ye think becase our min is'nt in it, that ye'll not find them that are able for ye? be off this minute, or by the powers, we'll make ye! be off! and don't dare lay your hand on them dacent, quiet boys, or we won't lave a skreed o' ye together!" so screamed these fair defenders of the Castle Wilmot territory, and of its right to procure those who claimed sanctuary in it.

The gentlemen, in defiance of these threats, continued to advance, and the amazons immediately saluted them with a volley of stones, and one of the party was knocked off his horse. The women huzzaed, and the gentlemen swore.

"Read the Riot Act!" commanded one of the Archers, who was a magistrate.

"To the divil with yourselves, and your Riot Act! ye manespirited palthroons! ye orange villains!" cried the ladies, and they continued to scream, curse, and fling stones.

"Fire, sir, on that mob of rioters!" said the magistrate above mentioned, to the officer commanding the detachment.

"Not where the only rioters are women, sir," replied the young military man.

"Fire on the men then!"—said the magistrate.

"The men are perfectly quiet, standing with their arms folded,

looking on; I could not possibly fire under such circumstances. My duty only is to protect you!"

"Then why do you not protect us?" demanded the Archer gentlemen.

"I should, if the assailants were men," replied the young officer. "But what can I do with a mob of women?"

"Hurrah for the red-coats!" shouted the fair rioters, who had stood quiet and silent, while doubtful as to the result of the colloquy between the civil and military authorities; "long life to 'em! 'tis them that knows how to trate the women! not like them cadgers from the town beyant;—them mudhering villains of process servers, that's thinkin' to get inside of the masther's son-in-law, the schamers of the world!—".

"It's a long march ye tak, sir," said the speaker-woman and ringleader of the party, turning to the officer. "May be you would like a dhrop of whiskey and a fresh egg, or some throut out of the river, or a roasted pratee?—if we had betther, we'd give it, but whatever it is, you have the 'cead mille faltha!' with it, any how; and something for your men too, the craturs."

The officer thankfully assented to the proposal, and there was a temporary cessation of hostilities.

"Make 'em give us back our min, sir," said the amazon coaxingly;—"do, and the Lord prosper ye! we won't pelt 'em any more, an' we'll give 'em something to ate into the bargin, for they're starving wid the hunger, God help 'em! will ye, agra, give us back them poor craturs?"

The good-humoured young man laughed, and promised his mediation; but the gentlemen scornfully rejected the terms, and had therefore to return faint from want of food, and harassed by the women who hung on their rear, pelting and cursing to the very outskirts of the town, which they regained half nearly dead, from fatigue, hunger, and bruises. Here they conducted the freeholders to an eating-house, where they were ordered "lashings of mate and whiskey," in exchange for their liberty.

"This is eligant fine ating, to be sure, Thady," observed one of them,—"but how will it be with us whin we go back? The Castle Wilmots will murdher us!"

"Faith, they will so," said Jim Naughten, who happened just then to walk in, ostensibly to make love to a daughter of the woman of the house, who was a cousin of his own, but truth obliges us to state our belief that his visit was rather diplomatic than gallant; be that as it may, it is more his cousin's affair than ours.

"Faith," you may be sure," continued this Job's comforter, "of as fine a bating as ever ye got in your lives;—I wish I was as sure of a fine estate. Ye must have great courage, boys, to think of standin' the counthry at all, after doing what ye're goin' to do. Not a fair, nor patthern, ye won't get murdhered at,—an' if you want a hundherd of malt, or a stone of salt, or if your wife has a lock of wool, or a thrifle of flax to sell, troth ye must do without it, or be comin' down every hand's turn by wather, for fear of the Castle Wilmot boys."

"We know that, as well as ye can tell us, Jim," groaned his auditors. "But if we wote agin the masther's ordhers, sorrow a thing we'll have to buy or sell at all; didn't we run out of the town to get quit of 'em all, an' didn't the Archers bring the army a top of us, weren't we made prisoners."

"Why did ye let 'em?"

"Why did ye let 'em, is it? asy said, Jim, but troth, if ye were in it yoursel' you w'd fine it far harder to help, than you think for; I dont care a ha'porth about a stroke of a stick, becase I'm used to it ever since I was small, but the baynet, Jim, is a quare thing, I wouldn't like a prod of it at-all-at-all."

"Pooh, what harum would it do you?" asked Jim, "see how the Castle Wilmot women were not afear'd of it."

"Why would they? whatever they done, they knew well; the sogers wouldn't touch em."

"Well, no matther for that now," Jim interrupted; "what do ye intend to do, boys?"

"What do we intend doin' is it? we intend doin' whatever we can't help doin' Jim!"

"Lads, will ye wote for Archer?"

"What else can we do, when the masther bids us, you know? troth if we don't, he'll sell our skins, let alone our bastes!"

"He won't be long over ye, any how," replied Jim.

"How's that?" demanded his auditors, eagerly.

"Don't ye know that Letterbrough is a lase of the Castle Wilmot lands, that Mr. McAlpine's father held for three lives; two of 'em are up, an' the last one is an ould woman that's dying every year of the rheumatics; so ye never can tell the minute ye'll come back to your raal masther; he's the one you ought to mind;—the one that owns the land, isn't it boys?—the man that, whether tinant or no, if ye were brought up before the grand jury, for being too fond of mutton, or too ready with the stick, would stand your friend, whin your own masther, as ye call him, w'd be sittin' fair an' asy by his parlour fire, writin' love letthers, or readin' out of a book; and a negur he is into

gain, that begrudges a dacent boy that w'd be goin' the
s bit an' sup, an' a mouthful of hay for his bastes!"
hin would he, Tim!" interrogated the much-shocked
roughs.
hin would he?" repeated Jim, deridingly;"—Don't ye
e would?—didn't he do it by mysel', an' bad manners to
it no matter about that now; I wasn't thrustin' to him,
od, for mate or dhrink; I had my own masther to go to,
d be praised; the man that has a sate by his fire, for
would come in, and lashings of the best of ating an'
ag, an' a *ceud mille failtha*, an' a tap on the shouldher
bargain; an' all this you have good rason to know,
r many's the time we sat together in his chimbly cor-
himsel' in the kitchen talkin' to us as free as if we were
in."
know that too, Jim," interrupted the freeholders; sure
'nt his equal in the country round, for the kind heart an'
a hand; an' if t'was himsel' that was standin' Jim, d'ye
e'd refuse him our sowls, let alone our votes? no, troth,
tch McAlpine to the devil for him, an' why not, but"—
it's right, boys," said Jim, not allowing the speaker to
is sentence,—"I'm sure you would, but you know his
aw is himsel' in a manner; behave the way ye ought
' I promise you, that you won't lose by it;—supposin'
at McAlpine banishes you off the lands, has'nt the
room an' to spare for ye, an' half the country besides!"
what will we do? the Archers have a hould of us now,
plied Jim's auditors, hesitatingly.
ll, stay with them, sure," but, he added laughing,
or us."
yea! how will that be at all?" queried the astonished
nes.
make ye sinsible of it to-morrow boys,"—replied the
—I'll be with ye airly by the first light, and now God be
"—and so saying Jim walked off, shouting his favourite
"tattered Jack Welsh," his only regret being, that
was not present to be "grigged" by it.

CHAPTER XII.

The following morning the Letterbrough freeholders were conveyed through the town in carriages, escorted by gentlemen mounted and armed, the mob roaring "Warringdon for ever! high for the English lord! Warringdon and emancipation! Down with the Archers! the Orangemen! down with McAlpine, the thraitor! down with 'em all! to the divel with the whole of em!" accompanying this kind consignment of Mr. Archer and his friends, by throwing hands-full of mud, dead cats, and, occasionally, a stone or two, at the carriage; venturing, however, rather cautiously on the last mark of disapprobation, being deterred by the pistols which peeped from the bosoms of the Archers.

At length the cavalcade reached their destination, and the freeholders were ushered into the ——— booth. They were received with loud plaudits by the Archer party, and cries of "Fine fellows! true to their landlord!" and by groans and hisses, curses and ferocious scowls, and muttered threats, by the Warringdons.

"Don't suffer yourselves to be intimidated, my honest men," said Mr. Archer's agent. "The Warringdon party may threaten, but they dare not injure you. Mr. Wilmot is a mighty great man, no doubt," he continued sneeringly, "and his tenants are fine bludgeoneers, but never you mind; the king happens to be a greater man than Mr. Wilmot; and as for his tenants, the first among them that lifts a stick against ye shall be lodged in the county jail."

"Aye, aye!" shouted the Castle Wilmots, in derision, "when you've caught us! once we are on our own mountains, d'ye think we'll be aisily had? Oh ye! what a chance you have of us! an' so ye think we'll wait for your lave to rise our sticks;—ye're comical fellows, troth!"

"Silence, silence!" the deputy assessor called out. "Come, my lads, your votes, whatever they are; give them at once, and don't be afraid."

"We won't sir," replied a little crabbed, half-starved looking man, advancing from the group.

it is your name?" asked the deputy assessor.
ly Sullivan."
you twenty-one years of age?"
nty-one years of age, is it?" repeated Thady. "Faith,
was thrustin' to that same! I am so, and a good
ars to the back of it, more's the pity."
you a freeholder of the county?"
if I was'nt, I wouldn't be here!" answered Thady.
e you the clear yearly sum of forty shillings, over and
ur rent?"
that jail-bird?" interrupted the Warringdon agent.
n the freeholder's oath!"
reeholder's oath was administered, and after that,
ded by the Warringdon party, the bribery oath also;
, having no more plausible objections to make, they
the man to proceed.
m do you vote for?" asked the deputy-assessor.
e for Lord Wardherdown," said Thady.
ringdon?" repeated the deputy-assessor, surprised.
ringdon!" echoed the Archer party with rage and aston-
. "Infamous cheating!—shameful! shameful to put
landlord and tenant! setting the county in a blaze!
traitors!"
rah! hurrah!" the Warringdons shouted. "Thady
for ever!—chair him! chair him!"
ccordingly they carried Thady on their shoulders
e room.
cample was followed by his companions; and as they
lking off, accompanied by the laughter and acclama-
ne party, and execration of the other, Thady turned to-
e Archers, and making a low bow, "Thank ye, gen-
for the mate an' the dhrink, an' the fine jaunt in your
rriages, and for all the honour ye ped us—ye see, we
advice, and wern't afeard to spake out."
me pass; let me pass, boys;" said O'Reilly, impa-
ushing through the shouting crowd. "Where's Mr.
"
e!" cried the object inquired for, advancing, and still
at the trick just played by Thady and his compeers.
hat is the matter, O'Reilly? you look bothered—is any
ing wrong?"
; Lord Templemore is polling for Archer in the barony

y's broad, good-humoured face darkened.

"That's one way of standing neuter, and be d—d to him! Hollo! one of ye there, Castle Wilmots! give me my hat!" he vociferated. "I'll just step to the committee-room, and see what's best to be done."

All agreed that the thing best to be done, was that a deputation of their party, headed by Mr. Malony, should wait without loss of time on the noble lord at his residence, a few minutes' walk from the Warringdon committee-room.

As these broad-shouldered, formidable supporters of Lord Warringdon defiled one after another, Mr. Malony bringing up the rear, into Lord Templemore's library, he was observed to change colour. He received them very courteously, however, and expressed much regret at seeing Mr. Malony's arm in a sling.

"I am much obliged to your Lordship," replied Mr. Malony; "luckily 'tis only my left arm; I have my right one still, for a case of need, whenever it comes:"—and Mr. Malony squared his shoulders—and Lord Templemore hemmed.

"My Lord," continued Mr. Malony, who had been selected as the spokesman of the party, "we have come here this morning on very particular business; to remind you, in fact, on the part of Lord Warringdon, of a circumstance you seem to have forgotten—namely—your promise of standing neuter between him and Mr. Archer—giving plumpers to Mr. Fitzgerald. Have you kept that promise, my Lord?"

"I am not in the habit of breaking my promises, Mr. Malony," replied Lord Templemore, with much dignity.

"I don't know what your habits may be, my Lord; but there must be a beginning to every habit, you know, and *that* beginning, it appears to me, you are making on the present occasion."

"How do you prove that, Mr. Malony?" the Earl asked.

"Why, my Lord, you are this very minute giving your second voices to Archer, in the barony of ——"

"I beg your pardon, I have not given my vote at all."

"You mean your personal vote, my Lord!" asked Mr. Malony.

His Lordship bowed assent.

"Oh, my Lord, that would be a very good answer in a court of law; but it won't do in a court of honour," said Mr. Malony, smiling somewhat contemptuously. "Your tenants are not standing neuter, and therefore your personal neutrality goes for nothing."

"I am not responsible for my tenants, Sir" replied Lord Templemore.

afraid your Lordship will find some difficulty in per-
Lord Warringdon and his friends that you are not,"
l Mr. Malony, accompanying the observation by a
hich the Earl hastened to reply.
lear Sir, allow me to explain to you my position with
o my tenantry in the barony you allude to. They all
er leases; pay their rent to a day; are never in arrears;
l, are comfortable, and therefore independent. Well,
erty in that neighbourhood borders that of Mr. Archer,
people say that they will not incur the enmity of the-
of an estate close to them, for a stranger like Lord
don, to whom they have no local attachment. In fact,
Sir, they have broke loose, the rascals! but they know
not in my power, and I cannot control them, or—"
t may be all very true, my Lord," interrupted Mr. Ma-
ut all your tenantry are not next neighbours of Mr.
. Give us an equivalent to those that have polled for
me other barony."
t willingly," his Lordship assented eagerly; "or I will
ven to double the number; will that satisfy you, as to
rtiality?"
ld your Lordship have any objection to state this ar-
at in writing?" asked a cautious member of the depu-

word, Sir,"—and the Earl was proceeding in a digni-
n, when interrupted by Mr. Malony.
ainly—there's no necessity for any stronger guarantee,
."
Templemore acknowledged the compliment by a bow
e.
" continued Mr. Malony, with a meaning look, "*I* hold
ise."
ook hands with the Earl, and departed with his train.

CHAPTER XIII.

mornings after the conversation just detailed, Mr.
Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. O'Leary, and half a dozen other
nd partizans, rushed into Lady Anne's drawing room,
out, "Good news—good news! the contest we may

say is over: the barony of ——, where Archer's chief force lies, will close in an hour; his men have been beaten back by the mob, so there have been but ten polled there as yet to-day, therefore by four o'clock it must all be over. We are watching them well; for fear they should personate from other baronies, and have left some fellows in the booth to kick up rows, and retard the polling. An express has just been sent off to Mr. Wilmot, to prevent his sending down any more men."

And now what shaking of hands, and wishing joy, followed this announcement, between the young Viscount, who had been since breakfast by the side of the gentle Isabel; (a delightful refuge from his noisy committee-room and his constituents.) How blandly his mother-in-law elect thanked! how sweetly his fair mistress smiled! how proud and gratified she looked! In a word, how delighted every body was with themselves and with one another. What shouts of triumph and self-gratulation rang through the house! How they did talk and laugh! what joy! what noise! what vociferation! what gesticulation! Oh, the mirth and good humour of successful Irish Electioneerers! Is there any mirth or good humour like it?"

An hour had thus passed unheeded, when Mr. Malony suddenly exclaimed, "There comes Father John! I left him in the booth, to bring me word the moment it should close. Hurrah!"

And he rushed to the hall-door, in his impatience to have all the particulars.

"When did it close?" he bawled, Father John not having yet come within speaking distance.

"'Tisn't closed at all," repeated the other.

"What then, man?"

"Opened!" said the priest.

"Opened!" repeated his interrogator, with a look of consternation. "What do you mean, Father John?"

"Why then, indeed, Mr. Malony, I mane just what I say. You know the men Lord Templemore promised us, to make up for those he gave Archer: well, 'tis by them the booth has been kept open, and they have a batch of two hundred for to-morrow, who stole in to-day, while nobody was watching, thinking the election over."

And now who can describe the rage and disappointment of Malony, and the Warringdon party, lately so triumphant, at this blight of their hopes.

"The rascal!" cried Malony, stamping. "Lord Warringdon, you must send him a challenge immediately."

"Oh, yes, yes! of course—cannot possibly be avoided!"

multaneously chimed in all the men present, forgetting in their eagerness the presence of the ladies.

Mr. Malony found his arm suddenly grasped.

"Do you want to kill him, Mr. Malony? do you—do you!" Isabel asked, trembling with agitation.

"I do not," he quietly replied; "but I want to return him."

"I had rather he never was returned," she said, wringing her hands, "than that he should run that risk."

"My God, Miss Wilmot, I wonder at you! a sensible girl, like you, to talk in this way;—sure he isn't made of glass!—he must stand his chance the same as others; but just take my advice, and go away quietly with your mother, and leave us to settle the business properly;—this is no place for you; come now, go away, like a good girl!"

"No!" she replied, "I'll not stir—I will *not* leave him to be murdered by you."

"Murdered by me!" Malony repeated highly affronted. "*That* is not exactly the way you should speak to one of your father's warmest friends, and for his sake, perhaps the most zealous supporter Lord Warringdon has. Murdered, indeed!"

"Oh, I am too miserable to know what I am saying:" and Isabel sank on the first seat near her, looking indeed most "miserable."

Now Mr. Malony could contemplate man's blood with much more philosophy than he could woman's tears, and his heart softened directly.

"I proposed his fighting entirely to serve him, God knows! For that matter, as Lord Templemore made the promise to me, personally, I have the best right to call upon him to keep it; so now, shake hands, and don't say I want to murder him, at any rate," he added, smiling good humouredly.

"But why should it be you either; why should any of you fight; the damage is done, and you can't repair it now," said Isabel, "leave it all as it is. This duelling is such a frightful and savage custom!"

"You! your father's daughter, and be frightened by pistols! you are growing to be a disgrace to the county; and I am not at all sorry you are about to transplant yourself among the quiet English," replied Malony, laughing.

He and the other gentlemen soon after withdrew, leaving the Viscount and his gentle mistress together, who, by the way, never appeared to him half so gentle or interesting as at that moment. Was it because she leaned her head so affectionately on his shoulder, and murmured forth his name with such

whispering tenderness? or was it merely because he app and admired her womanly abhorrence of duelling?

And now let us follow the movements of Mr. Malony a belligerent companions. A second visit to Lord Templemore was immediately decided upon, and a certain Mr. McCarthy was deputed to remonstrate in Mr. Malony's name, on his breach of promise.

The noble Earl alleged he had kept his word.

"Yes, my Lord, but in such a manner that you have done us harm instead of good; for were it not for you, the contest would now be over," replied Mr. McCarthy.

"Not being aware of the politics of your committee-room, I could not possibly imagine that giving you forty votes would be an injury to your cause," replied the Earl.

Mr. McCarthy smiled incredulously. "Every body, my Lord, knew that our object was to close that booth. Will you give it under your hand, that you alone of the whole town was ignorant of it? and that you had no conversation on the subject with Mr. Archer?"

"My verbal assertion is sufficient, I should think, sir."

"Not in Mr. Malony's opinion, this time, my Lord," Mc Carthy retorted.

"I certainly will not give any other voucher, sir," the Earl answered, reddening with displeasure.

"Then, in that case, my Lord, I am directed by Mr. Malony to demand satisfaction for what he considers an intentional injury on your Lordship's part," said Mr. McCarthy.

"I have done what I promised," insisted Lord Templemore, "and I will not suffer myself to be provoked into a quarrel with Mr. Malony, because he happens to be in an ill-humour. My life is far too valuable to my family to risk it in an idle brawl, with a hot-headed young man like Mr. Malony."

"That is your answer, my Lord?"

"That is my answer, Mr. McCarthy.

"I am afraid, then, that such an answer will not satisfy Mr. Malony, and that he may consider himself obliged to give your Lordship a rather unpleasant proof of his opinion of your conduct," said Mr. McCarthy, rising and moving towards the door.

"Mr. Malony had better take care how he subjects himself to a law process," Lord Templemore observed, as he rang the bell.

His Lordship immediately discovered he had very particular business at Mount Pleasant, and was stepping into his carriage about an hour after the above conversation, when he felt a whi

"If he shouldn't mane what he says, Father John?"

"Och, is it making a liar of your masther ye are?" queried the orator with a half laugh.

"God help us!" they groaned; "well, Father John, we'll do your bidden, and vote for the English Lord."

"Do at your peril!" would say Mr. Fahy; "do, and I'll dhrive every mother son of ye, not a baste ye haye, that shan't be in the pound twenty-four hours after you give that vote."

"Ohra, murdher! what's to become of us at all!" cried the poor trembling wretches.

And then an electioneering agent for Archer would whisper, "A couple of pounds a head boys, an' the best of ating an' drinking, what do ye say to that?"

"Which way do ye wote, ye vellians of the world?" the Jim Naughten's boys, and the Castle Wilmot's would roar, whirling their "ferrals."

"For ye, for ye!" they cried, more influenced by the dread of hell-fire in prospect, and of a sound drubbing at the moment, than by love of money, or even fear of being made houseless.

"Success to ye! glory to ye! hurrah for the thrue and staunch friends of their religion; high for the McAlpines!" the Warringdon's shouted.

"Ye impident blackguards! ye shall pay for this,—take my word for it, every identical man o' ye!" the infuriated agent vociferated. And, perceiving some signs of vacillation of purpose in the crowd, he added:

"If there are any among ye will stand by their masther and their cabins, and the bastes, and their children, let 'em come over to my side!"

A few answered the appeal.

"Ah the renegades! the apostates! the vellains;" the Castle Wilmots howled, as they rushed on the small and terrified band.

The yells and shrieks became so appalling, and there occurred so many bleeding heads and fractured fingers, that the military were called out, to restore order; and indeed, after shooting two or three, and wounding twice as many more, the military partially succeeded in this object.

But the McAlpines took advantage of the general confusion, "to slip away unknown," and return quietly to their own homes, leaving the Archers and Warringdons, to dispute as to whom they by right belonged: and great was the astonishment and indignation of both parties, when they discovered the absence of the objects of their contention.

ering a majority, that Mr. Archer withdrew opposition, and Viscount Warringdon and Mr. Fitzgerald were declared by the High Sheriff "duly elected, as Knights of the Shire," for the county of ——."

CHAPTER XIV.

And now, are not our readers as wearied of the noise and confusion of an Irish election, as our Viscount himself? We think it more than probable that they are; and therefore we will spare them the added noise and confusion of the chairing; and yet we confess we do so reluctantly. There is something to our mind, so gloriously characteristic of the Irish people, in their true, deep-felt, deep-toned, joyous' affectionate, energetic huzza for a popular candidate; and then the windows crowded with ladies, many of them young and pretty; and all good-humoured (that day at least), waving their handkerchiefs; and the candidate looking up at them, as he sits enthroned on the shoulders of the people, and bowing so graciously, and his friends on either side of him, holding banners; and all above and beneath, and around him, shouting his name;—is there a situation in human life more pardonably intoxicating to human vanity than this? at least to a country gentleman in Ireland, where the desire for popularity, and the sensibility to it, are so strong.

The day was closed by a grand dinner given by his friends and constituents, in honour of the new member; at which there was a great deal of drinking and speechifying; and the following evening the Viscount returned the compliment by a ball, and supper, for the special purpose of thanking the ladies of his party: and such a gay ball!—there were all the officers of the garrison at it, and two very dashing Captains of Dragoons;—a God-send by the way for which the ladies were indebted to Mr. Archer, that gentleman having applied for two troops of horse to ride down the riotous Castle Wilmots; (and Captains of Dragoons being rarities, the town of C—— not having the advantage of being a cavalry station); they naturally attracted the brightest eyes in the room. Then there was Mr. Malony, and Mr. McCarthy, and a number of other young, laughing, dancing men of good property; and then the

looking on; I could not possibly fire under such circumstances. My duty only is to protect you!"

"Then why do you not protect us!" demanded the Archer gentlemen.

"I should, if the assailants were men," replied the young officer. "But what can I do with a mob of women?"

"Hurrah for the red-coats!" shouted the fair rioters, who had stood quiet and silent, while doubtful as to the result of the colloquy between the civil and military authorities; "long life to 'em! 'tis them that knows how to trate the women! not like them cadgers from the town beyant;—them mudhering villains of process servers, that's thinkin' to get inside of the masther's son-in-law, the schamers of the world!—".

"It's a long march ye tak, sir," said the speaker-woman and ringleader of the party, turning to the officer. "May be you would like a dhrop of whiskey and a fresh egg, or some throut out of the river, or a roasted pratee?—if we had betther, we'd give it, but whatever it is, you have the 'cead mille faltha!' with it, any how; and something for your men too, the craturs."

The officer thankfully assented to the proposal, and there was a temporary cessation of hostilities.

"Make 'em give us back our min, sir," said the amazon coaxingly;—"do, and the Lord prosper ye! we won't pelt 'em any more, an' we'll give 'em something to ate into the bargin, for they're starving wid the hunger, God help 'em! will ye, agra, give us back them poor craturs!"

The good-humoured young man laughed, and promised his mediation; but the gentlemen scornfully rejected the terms, and had therefore to return faint from want of food, and harassed by the women who hung on their rear, pelting and cursing to the very outskirts of the town, which they regained half nearly dead, from fatigue, hunger, and bruises. Here they conducted the freeholders to an eating-house, where they were ordered "lashings of mate and whiskey," in exchange for their liberty.

"This is eligant fine ating, to be sure, Thady," observed one of them,—"but how will it be with us whin we go back? The Castle Wilmots will murdher us!"

"Faith, they will so," said Jim Naughten, who happened just then to walk in, ostensibly to make love to a daughter of the woman of the house, who was a cousin of his own, but truth obliges us to state our belief that his visit was rather diplomatic than gallant; be that as it may, it is more his cousin's affair than ours.

"We have not yet quite settled the *when*," replied the Lady, smiling.

And here we would request the reader to imagine the ball over, and permit us to end our chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

Apart from all the gossip about him, would it not be an act of christian charity, to inquire what has really become, during this long interval, of our poor wounded lover of fun, now that we have a little leisure on our hands?

As he was leaving the court-house in company with Mr. Malony, the memorable morning of the duel, he was met by Lady Anne, who enticed him home with her, by promising him some capital fun at the electioneering dinner she was to give that day.

He laughed during the evening, with all his customary energy; he, and his wounded fellow-duellist, being the noisiest revellers, and most affectionate friends of the party. But, unfortunately he drank rather more on that occasion than was his custom; the consequence of which was, that (not being an eel, or an Irishman, and therefore not used to being skinned, or knocked on the head), before morning he was in a burning fever, roaring about fun and pistols, and requiring Pat Murphy's and Barthy Kilfoy's united strength to keep him from jumping out of the window; during his illness, nothing could equal Lady Anne's tender and devoted attention, sitting up with him, and suffering no hand but her own to smooth his pillow, or give him his draughts. Her care was, as every body remarked, motherly, and indeed, Maria also gained much credit by her praise-worthy attentions to their young guest; for as soon as he was able to move into an adjoining apartment, converted for his convenience into a temporary sitting room, the kind Maria had always some nice little funny story to beguile his tedious hours of recovery, seldom or ever leaving the invalid, except for a short walk, and apparently totally uninterested in the scene of excitement which absorbed every body else.

On the morning after the ball, Mr. Barham, for the first time since his illness, joined the family at breakfast. Lord War-

ingdon and Isabel soon slipped away to say some more last words, previous to his lordship's threatened departure for London, with Mr. Wilmot, for the purpose of making the necessary preparations for the reception of his affianced bride, who was shortly to follow with her mother and sister; and Mr. Wilmot, who had just arrived, retired to learn from Pat Murphy, all the "ins and outs" of the election; so that of the group part assembled at breakfast, there now remained but Lady Anne, Maria, and her "invalid friend."

"And so now its over, election, chairing, and all, and I have not seen one bit of it; I, that could not sleep for a week before the poll opened, thinking of the fun I should have had,—not to have had any at all,—isn't it too bad?" asked Barham, in a tone of good-humoured discontent.

Maria and her mother agreed that it was, indeed, a grievous misfortune.

"By the way, Miss Wilmot, I was just thinking how very droll it is that your guess about a duel being my second adventure, should have turned out true; is'nt it very funny? how you must have laughed when you heard I was wounded. I am very sorry I did'nt think of putting off my duel for a few days, just to see a little of the fun first,—but I was so vexed, you see, at the time, that I never thought of it,—Miss Wilmot, I forget what you said my third adventure in Ireland would be?"

"To be married, I think," replied Maria, carelessly,—"was it not?"

"Oh yes, I remember; but I don't think that guess is as lucky as the other, for as I am not married yet, it is'nt likely I shall be, in the few days I remain in Ireland."

"Are you going so soon?" inquired Lady Anne, her heart sinking within her at this cool announcement. "I thought you were to wait for us, and travel together."

"Why I must, you see, whether I will or no; Sir Willoughby Turner has written me such a blowing-up, because I stay idling here; he says, instead of being at college, reading my course; and threatening he won't give me a farthing of money till I return. 'Tisn't his money, at any rate, so he need not badger me so, for spending my own. I shall be so glad when I come of age, and can do as I like. And I shall be so sorry to go! I don't know what I shall do with myself, when I return to England, I shall find it so stupid. I never, in all my life, was so happy as I have been here, nor met such good-nature. As for your kindness, Lady Anne, and Miss Wilmot's, I never can forget it as long as I live,—nursing me as if I was

your son and brother. I shall very often think of you both. Will you not come soon and see me at Cralcourt? I shall be so delighted to see you, particularly Miss Wilmot; and you must not forget to bring all your servants, and try and persuade Father John to come, too! how glad I shall be, to be sure!"

Lady Anne looked over at her daughter, who immediately arose and left the room.

"Pray, Mr. Barham, may I ask were you serious in inviting my daughter as a *friend* to your house?" asked his hostess, in a tone of apparently suppressed emotion.

"Oh, yes, to be sure, quite serious; I hope you have too good an opinion of me to suppose I was not perfectly in earnest, when I invited her to Cralcourt: could you possibly imagine me so ungrateful?" he asked, with warmth.

The lady played awhile with the chain round her neck, and hemmed; at length, she said, in a constrained manner, "Mr. Barham, you have not, it seems, perceived the drift of my question."

Mr. Barham entreated her to explain; but she remained silent, and apparently, very much embarrassed, and somewhat offended.

"I am afraid I have displeased you, in some way, Lady Anne; I wish you would tell me in what."

"I will be candid with you," she replied, with great seeming effort; "I am disappointed in you."

"How,—what have I done?"

"You have acted ungenerously, very ungenerously, towards a family who deserved, from you, at least, different treatment."

"What family?" the young man asked, surprised.

"Mine, Mr. Barham."

"Yours, Lady Anne? I act ungenerously towards your family! how?"

"My dear Mr. Barham, recollect yourself, I beg."

Mr. Barham did recollect himself, as desired, but in vain. After a careful review, in his own mind, of his conduct during the two months of his acquaintance with, and domestication in, the Wilmot family, he could not charge his conscience with a single act, word, or even thought, of the nature imputed to him.

"I declare, Lady Anne," he said, after a few moments' pause, "I cannot imagine what you mean;—there must be some mistake."

"It is a mistake, then, which the whole county has fallen into, as well as myself," replied the lady, with a slightly sarcastic expression about the mouth; "for every one who saw you together, formed the same opinion."

"Saw me and whom together, Lady Anne?"

"My daughter, sir," she replied.

"And what opinion do you say they formed?" again queried the puzzled boy.

"Mr. Barham, when a gentleman pays exclusive attention to a young lady, seeking her society in preference to that of all others; and this preference continuing during months to be manifested before strangers, as well as her own family; what is the motive generally assigned by the world for his conduct?"

"Oh, people say that he is in love with her;—but why do you ask?"

Lady Anne continued:—"And if the young lady, considering these attentions in the light that all her acquaintances do, should become attached to the gentleman, giving him such proofs of her affection as subject her to public comment, do you think the gentleman would act generously, or even honourably, if, after all this, he invites the lady as a *friend* to his house?"

The light suddenly flashed on the bewildered Barham—"My goodness! surely you cannot mean *that*, Lady Anne?"

"Mean what?" she inquired.

"Mean that I paid attentions to Miss Wilmot, and that she———" he stopped, embarrassed.

"And that she is attached to you?" asked Lady Anne, finishing the sentence for him. "Yes, that was exactly my meaning."

"But, Miss Wilmot and I never talked a word about love in all our lives,—no, no more than I and Father John did: we used only to laugh together. I never intended,———" he hesitated again.

"I cannot possibly tell what you may have intended, my dear Mr. Barham," said Lady Anne, taking him up; "all I can know is, what you have done; and all I can say is, that every body who saw you together supposed you were her declared lover. Do you imagine I would otherwise have permitted her to sit, for hours, by your couch, and to remain at home and alone with you, on so remarkable an occasion as an election ball? Her absence was naturally commented upon, and then there was a laugh among the gentlemen,—'Miss Wilmot, of course, had remained with her friend, Mr. Barham:' every one asking when it was to be: I replied 'that my daughter had not taken me into her confidence, and, therefore, that I knew just as much about the matter as they did.' Either you have deceived my daughter, or she has deceived me; whichever way it is, she will now become the ridicule of all the envious misses of her

acquaintance; the gay, laughing Maria Wilmot turned into a lackidaisacal young lady, condemned to wear the willow, will, of course, amazingly divert them; and, for this highly gratifying situation, she will have to thank you. Am I not, therefore, justified in saying that you have acted ungenerously towards her?"

"But how am I accountable for what people choose to say I meant, but which I did not mean?" asked Barham, naturally enough objecting to Lady Anne's forced inference.

"You don't feel any regret, then, at being, though unintentionally (as you assert), the cause of injury to an amiable and confiding young person?" inquired Lady Anne. "I must, in that case, have, indeed, a bad opinion of you, and bitterly regret the day we ever met."

Poor Barham bit his lips, and knit his brows in painful and perplexing cogitation. He could not bear to think of his kind and merry friend, Maria, becoming the laughing-stock of her acquaintances, because she had so often made laughing-stocks of others for his amusement, and yet he did not relish the alternative,—namely, making her his wife.

He was still hesitating, when the door opened, and Mr. Malony appeared.

"Ah! my dear fellow, how goes it?" he said, advancing, and shaking the late sufferer cordially by the hand. "I am delighted to see you out of your room, at last, and, by the way, I don't think you ever would have come out of it at all, but for Lady Anne and Miss Wilmot."

Barham's heart smote him, and he bit his lips more energetically than before.

Lady Anne made an excuse for leaving the room.

"Well, when is it to be, Barham?" inquired Malony, laying his hand on his friend's shoulder, and smiling significantly.

"I don't understand you," replied the lover, *malgré lui*.

"Why, your wedding, to be sure!"

"My wedding?"

"Oh, come, nonsense, Barham, it's no secret now, I can tell you; the whole town knows it as well as you do yourself. There was nothing else talked of at the ball, last night:—well, I wish you joy; you could not have made a better choice."

"I wonder why he did not choose her himself, then," thought the young Englishman.

Mr. Malony continued: "A good-natured, pleasant girl, as ever lived, and devilish fond of you, she must be, to have stayed whole days in your sick room, instead of dashing about

at the election, and, faith, we had a loss in her; many a man he has laughed into voting for her father:—she will keep you alive, Barham."

"But, suppose, Malony, that all this should be a mistake, and that we are not going to be married at all; what would you say then?"

"Why, I should say it would be very odd in you, and very unlucky for her: I assure you, that both herself and mother are commented upon already, for their imprudence about you, and nothing kept the peoples' tongues between their teeth, at the ball, but the supposition of your engagement. Oh, no, you are too honourable a fellow for that," observed Malony.

"I am in for it, I see," said Barham to himself: he paused a moment, and then added aloud, "Well, Malony, no harm done, whatever they say, for we *are* engaged."

"To be sure, I knew you were; have you got your guardian's consent?"

"I have not yet applied for it."

"He may refuse, perhaps, thinking you too young; but you can go to Gretna, in that case, you know."

"Yes, I know," answered the "happy man."

Here Lady Anne and her daughter re-entered the room together.

Mr. Malony walked up to Maria, and, after the usual salutation, "wished her joy."

"Of what?" she inquired, looking surprised, and, for once in her life, at least, feeling precisely as she seemed to feel; for her mother's report of the conversation with her intended lover had not, by any means, prepared her for so speedy and joyous a conclusion.

Mr. Malony laughed. "Ah, you will be Maria Wilmot, I see, to the end of the chapter. How innocent you look!"

"I really am innocent of all comprehension of your meaning, Mr. Malony," she replied.

"Confess, like the frank, honest girl you are, that you are going to be married, and not sorry for it," he added, lowering his voice into a confidential whisper.

"Well, Mr. Malony, like the frank, honest girl I am, I declare to you 'tis all a mistake, and I *am* very sorry for it," Maria answered, summoning up her usual carelessness of manner.

"All a mistake! that's just what Barham himself said, at first, and afterwards acknowledged it was no mistake at all;—there's never believing a word you lovers say."

Lady Anne fixed her examining look on Barham; he understood its meaning, and immediately advanced towards her.

"Lady Anne," he said, in a low voice, "I wish to speak with you."

They withdrew together to a window, and Barham continued:—"Malony tells me, not only that every body thinks Miss Wilmot and I are engaged, but that she is even blamed for all the kindness she has shown me; I need not say how unhappy I should be, were I the cause of injury to her; and so, I was thinking that we had better be married, since it is the general opinion that we ought. I will thank you to mention what I have said to Miss Wilmot."

"Certainly, my dear young friend," replied Lady Anne, in her most endearing manner: "and I need not say with what pleasure I shall receive you into my family. I must ever love and honour the manly and feeling mind you have, by your present decision, evinced."

Mr. Malony, after again shaking hands and wishing joy, took his leave; and Lady Anne ran to communicate the good tidings to her husband and young daughter.

About a fortnight after Mr. Barham's proposal, Cralcourt received Maria Wilmot as its mistress; and, in another fortnight after that, the Morning Post announced the marriage of Viscount Warringdon, eldest son of Earl Glenville, and Isabel, second daughter of Robert Wilmot, Esq., of Castle Wilmot, in the county of ———, late M.P., &c. Then followed a long list of the Dukes, Marquisses, Earls, and their consorts, who had partaken of the elegant dejuné, at the splendid mansion in Park-lane, belonging to the Earl of Rochford, uncle to the lovely, amiable, and accomplished bride: and it was also further stated, for the instruction of the world at large, that the happy pair had set off, immediately after the ceremony, for Sutton Park, the seat of Earl Glenville, where they were to remain during the honey moon.

CHAPTER XVI.

Lady Warringdon was a beauty, a *bel esprit*, a leader of fashion,—was she happy?

We will answer that question by asking the reader to imagine four years elapsed since the event which closed our last

chapter, and accompany us to the same London mansion in which we opened our tale, and enter with us an apartment which bears the stamp of female occupancy. The piano stands open,—the harp uncovered,—a guitar is carelessly thrown aside on an ottoman,—richly-bound volumes lie scattered about the room,—new music, albums, annuals, half-cut reviews, and vases of flowers, intermingled in not ungraceful confusion, with the thousand little expensive trifles which a fashionable woman loves to collect around her. A lady, half-reclined on a sofa, listless and unoccupied, her eyes fixed on the fire; the blaze had caught the cheek turned to it, but the other side of her face was pale; and pale, one might have supposed, rather from late hours, than painful thoughts, were it not for the drooping attitude of her head, and the slight contraction of her brow. Her reverie was broken by a tap at the door.

"Come in," she said, in a voice which harmonized with the pensive refinement of her appearance.

A handsome, fashionable-looking man entered.

"How d'ye do?" he carelessly asked, throwing himself on the couch opposite to that occupied by the lady.

"Very well, I am much obliged to you," she answered, in the same tone of apparent good-humoured indifference: but one, skilled in interpreting the inflexions of the human voice would have detected displeasure and dislike lurking under the assumed carelessness of both the speakers.

"I wonder you did not go to hear Pasta last night; all the world was there," observed the gentleman. "Didn't you mention something about your wish of seeing the new opera, the last time I saw you?"

"Yes, I dare say I did," replied the lady; "but recollect that the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you is full three days ago; and then you, who have studied female nature so accurately, and so successfully, will not wonder at my having changed my mind."

"Certainly not—I neither wonder nor condemn; on the contrary, I consider woman's changeability as her greatest charm, as well as her highest privilege. What can be more tiresome or insipid than those women who are 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever'—you see I can quote scripture, my fair wife. By the way, may I ask whether your cutting Lady Seaton the other night at the Duchess of ——'s is to be considered as part and parcel of the same charming vacillation of purpose which occasioned your cutting the opera last night?"

"No;" replied the lady, in a quiet tone, but with a height-

ened colour; "I have cut the opera merely for a night, whereas I have cut Lady Seaton for ever."

"Indeed!" said the gentleman, brushing up his hair at the mirror, and with affected indifference of manner, belied however by the sarcastic curl of his lips. "If it be not an impertinent question, may I ask why?"

"Why?" repeated the lady, and her beautiful mouth wore the same scornful expression as that of her companion.

"Yes, why?"

The lady gave a forced laugh, and the gentleman pushed in and out his lips.

"These little airs of disdain are quite bewitching, I confess, and would, to a lover, prove absolutely irresistible, but as I happen unfortunately to be only your husband, they are thrown away upon me. May I request then that you will favour me with an intelligible answer to an intelligible question: why do you intend cutting your friend Lady Seaton?"

"*Your* friend, you mean, my Lord."

"Well, granted she is my friend, is that a reason why you should reject her as an acquaintance?"

"Yes, a full and sufficient reason," the lady firmly replied. "If you were not always at her house, I might go there sometimes."

"All very romantic and interesting," observed the husband, yawning; "and quite in character for the heroine of a novel, or a young lady brought up by a maiden aunt, during the honeymoon; but rather too new in a woman of fashion after four years' marriage; these tender reproaches are, I must acknowledge *tant soit peu ridicules;* although it must be of course vastly flattering to my vanity, to find my lovely and admired wife still country girl enough to be jealous of me."

His cold and ironical smile was repaid by a glance of haughty indignation, as she exclaimed:

"Jealous of you? oh no! that time has long past, my good Lord. No; in my refusal to associate with Lady Seaton, I am actuated by the same motive which would prevent my continuing acquaintanceship with any other married man's friend;—respect for myself."

"But Lady Seaton is received by all the world," Lord Glenville replied, in a tone of suppressed anger.

"Very possibly; all the world does not happen to know what I know of her."

"And do you imagine that it will be in your power to put out of society the most admired woman in London, yourself always of course excepted?" the Earl added sarcastically.

"I do not want to put Lady Seaton out of society, I merely desire to exclude her from my own house."

"As your house happens also to be mine, I beg leave to enter my protest against that decree. While she is received anywhere else, she shall be received here," said Lord Glenville, in an easy unembarrassed tone of authority.

"Then, my lord," replied his lady, "it is fair to inform you that the day she enters your house I leave it."

"And so I must e'en take my choice between you! sad alternative! I would fain be blessed with the presence of both," the gentleman sneered.

"My God! is it then come to this?" Lady Glenville murmured.

A thundering knock at the hall-door caused a momentary interruption in the matrimonial dialogue, and a footman soon after entered the room, and announced the Marquis of Tiverton.

The lady coloured, and the gentleman smiled.

"Shew him up," he said.

"Into another room, then, if you please," interrupted the lady; "I am not in tone to see company to-day."

"Ah the *cavalière servante* is never company, you know; *mais comme vouz voudrez*," he replied carelessly. "*Au plaisir, ma belle*," he nodded, as he left the room to receive his friend.

Lady Glenville started from her seat, and walked up and down in agitation.

"And is this the conclusion of a marriage of affection? after four years of outrage and insult, to be now thrust from his house; my husband's house; the house of the man I loved;—ah, how deeply, devotedly, and until lately—very lately—how undeviatingly! My God! have I deserved this?—Have I? Yes!" she added, suddenly sinking on her knees—"Yes! for in the day of my happiness I never bowed before Thee in gratitude; I never gave thanks for my blessings, nor prayed for their continuance. I was happy, and I cared not to inquire who had made me so. I did not even come to Thee in my sorrow. I sought consolation elsewhere for a wrung and wretched heart—sought, but never found it! My friends laughed, while I wept. From one being alone have I met sympathy; and from that sympathy, oh, my God! in mercy protect me now!"

She was still in the attitude of supplication when the door suddenly opened, and Lord Glenville and his friend entered: she arose hastily, and a deep flush of resentment and confusion overspread her face, as she glanced from her husband to his companion.

"*La belle dévote!*" exclaimed her lord, ironically. "Tiverton, confess I am the happiest husband you know; 'tisn't every man who, when he unexpectedly enters his wife's boudoir, need only fear interrupting a flirtation with Heaven. How interesting to find her, before whom all knees bow in homage, herself bending the knee! What a pretty subject for a sonnet! 'On Lady G. praying.' We have plenty of verses on sleeping, singing, dancing, playing beauties, but not any, at least that I recollect, on a praying one. Now, there's a subject for your muse, Tiverton; talk it over with the fair devotee, while I go, for a minute, to Lady Seaton's," accompanying this studied insult by a glance of a strange sort of expression at his wife. It did not pass unobserved by her, for she happened at that moment to raise her eyes to his; and the colour, which had mounted to her face at his insult, suddenly left it at his glance.

"*Adieu, mon ami!* I shall meet you at five in the Park," said the fashionable husband, as he ran down stairs.

Lady Glenville had assumed her usual easy, unembarrassed manner, but although she talked of the nothings of the day with more than her customary vivacity, it was evident to her companion, from the varying of her complexion, that her apparent spirits were the result of an inward struggle. He became abstracted, and there was a silence of a few moments, which was then broken by him.

"Something has discomposed you, this morning, Lady Glenville."

"Why should you imagine so?" she asked.

"Again at your old habit of giving a question for an answer!" Lord Tiverton said, smiling. "And yet I would not, if I could, break you of it; 'tis the natural recourse of an ingenuous mind, that will not give an untrue answer, and cannot give the true one; and, in its simplicity, imagines it has, by its artless device, baffled the curious inquirer. Ah, but you are a bad dissembler, Lady Glenville: 'you wear your heart upon your sleeve,' and you know what follows."

"Hush!" replied the lady playfully, though tears stood in her eyes. "Who talks of hearts in these days? What would become of your character as a man of fashion, if I were to say that I had heard you mention such a word?"

"Lady Glenville, something has agitated you, this morning, I am sure there has. I know you too well to be deceived. Allow me, then, the privilege of a sincere and attached friend, and give me your confidence. I may be able perhaps to explain for you, or even advise. You will at least believe me anxious to

serve you; my ability to do so, alas! remains to be proved: but such as I am, head and heart, you know that you can command me."

"I am obliged by your offer, my Lord; but there is no room for explanation—no need of counsel on the present occasion;" replied his companion. "Lord Glenville has signified to me his intention of forcing Lady Seaton on me, and I—"

"Oh impossible!" exclaimed the Marquis, interrupting her. "Impossible!—you mistake him."

"And I," the lady continued, "have signified to him my intention of leaving his house, if he does. Oh no! I have not mistaken him!" she added bitterly.

Lord Tiverton rose abruptly from his seat, and paced the room in much agitation. Suddenly he stopped:—

"And when you leave Glenville, where will you go, while awaiting the preliminary arrangements for your future maintenance? Your mother is not in town, and even if she were, you know how little she is able to enter into your feelings—your virtuous feelings—of what is due to a wife; then your sister—"

"I know all you would say, my Lord," interrupted Lady Glenville. "I do not require to be reminded that I stand alone in the world," she added mournfully.

"Alone in the world!" he exclaimed, taking a seat near her; "no, not while I remain in it!" And then lowering his voice into a whisper," there is one house at least which would open wide to receive you, one heart, where you would be enshrined, worshipped; a heart consecrated to you alone; one, I will not say worthy of you, but at least more worthy than his who would prefer a Lady Seaton to you. Try a new fate—you are unhappy—neglected: try a new fate, beloved Isabel!" he murmured tenderly, endeavouring gently to unlock one of the clasped hands between which her head was buried.

She withdrew her hand, but it was cold and trembling; and when she looked up at him, her face was deadly pale.

"Leave me, Marquis of Tiverton!" she said, slowly and solemnly. "We can never meet again. Leave me, my Lord," for he still hesitated. "Leave me at once, and for ever; I know you at last!"

She rang the bell. "I wish your Lordship good morning," she added, as a servant attended the Marquis to his carriage.

"Ah, Glenville! were you demon enough to plan this!" Isabel exclaimed, when once again alone. "Oh yes! yes—I read it in the cold, heartless triumph of that glance—that parting look. Yes! Glenville you *were* demon enough to plan this.

You, my husband, my protector, who vowed before God to love and to cherish me. You would have betrayed me to degradation. And is this plotter against the honour of his own wife the man who was once *my* Warringdon; the man I worshipped, alas! more than ever I did my God! I am punished. My idol has fallen; and it has crushed me, even while I knelt before it! And now the last frail reed on which I leaned for human sympathy is broken. Tiverton, too, plotted against me—the tempter who offered balm for the throbbing, tortured heart, and, behold! the balm was poison! Ah, Marquis of Tiverton, you are revenged. When you were only George Damer, with a thousand a year, you loved me, and I was inclined to love you, but my mother! Ah, no! I will be honest with myself at least. My own ambition, my own worldliness whispered, I might do better, and I listened to those bad counsellors, and stifled my growing attachment. You are revenged, Tiverton;—I love you now. Ay—to my own conscience, and to my God, I will confess that grievous, sinful secret. The woman who, from ambition, would not allow herself to love you, when her love would have been virtue, now that she has attained all which in her worldliness she coveted, would give up all and follow you, were you again George Damer, and she Isabel Wilmot, over the world!—And the woman who says this is now the wife of another! Are you not revenged, Marquis of Tiverton! and is not my punishment, oh, my God! greater than I can bear, though not greater than I deserve!"

The footman who entered about an hour after Lord Tiverton's departure, found his lady lying on the floor, in a state of insensibility. She was carried to her own room, and the next morning was in a brain fever, attended by three physicians, and the papers rang with a recent matrimonial *fracas* in high life, and of the consequent dangerous indisposition of a lovely Countess, and the *not* consequent despair of her noble Lord.

CHAPTER XVII.

ı to Lord Glenville's disappointment, his lady did not die, ugh she had three physicians, and, as soon as she reco- consciousness, a clergyman attending her.
he must feel herself going, since she sends for a clergy- n," thought her loving Lord. A month passed, and Lady rille was still confined to her room, but able to sit up for a ours. Her own woman brought her the cards and notes uiry, left during her illness; the greatest number of both from the Marquis of Tiverton.
'he Marquis, my Lady, used to call four and five times a o ask after your Ladyship," said the woman. "I don't he was very well himself, either, my Lady; he was look- o pale and wan, you would hardly have known him, my ;—every body was remarking it."
ndeed! I am sorry to hear it, Edwards; and have you hap- , by chance, to learn how he is now?" inquired the lady, gling for composure.
h yes, my Lady, he is now pretty well again: I saw him day, and he desired his best compliments to your Lady- and begged I would hand you this note."
ly Glenville's first impulse was to refuse receiving the but she recollected how strange this would appear to the n; she took it, therefore, and broke the seal with trem- fingers, and a beating heart; the characters were evident- ed in haste and agitation, and they ran thus:—
'our woman tells me that you are, at length, able to sit up, re recovering strength. You are nominally the sufferer, et I have suffered more than you:—you lay, happily, in- le to either bodily or mental anguish, while I felt for you at you did not feel for yourself: I bore your and my own t of trouble at the same time. You have banished me your presence, Isabel; but I cannot banish you from my

In a few weeks I shall leave England:—I have some f a journey over-land to Persia. I require to break new d; and, as it is possible, in my present state of health, that never return, will you allow me to see you, for a few mi- , before I depart?"
'o, no, no!" murmured the lady, (she had previously dis-

embarrassed herself of Edwards' presence) I must not, I dare not again meet you, Tiverton. No: it would be a presumptuous tempting of my fate. No! when I was, as I thought, dying, I prayed to be enabled to root out of my heart my sinful love for you, and I am sure He heard me; it may not be done in a month, nor even a year, but, with his help, it will be done before I die, at least. Oh, I trust, I trust it will! No, Tiverton although you are leaving, and, perhaps for ever, your native land, I will not see you. No! although in losing you, I lose the only human being who cares about me, for you *do* love me, I believe, as well as man *can* love: but it was love still, it was something to cling to, and—"

Edwards here bustled into the room.

"I have good news for you, my Lady!"

"Good news for me!" repeated Isabel, pensively.

"Lady Anne is just arrived in town, at Lord Rochford's, and has sent to know if you can see her. She has travelled all the way from Rome, post haste, on seeing the accounts in the papers, of your Ladyship's illness."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Lady Glenville, bursting into tears. "That was like a mother! Oh, my mother! this is very good of you."

In a few minutes afterwards, Lady Anne entered her daughter's room. The mother's countenance was nearly as tranquil as usual, while her child lay almost convulsed, from contending feelings, in her arms.

"Dearest, dearest mother, you pity me, do you not?" she murmured. "Oh! I know you do, for you have come to me, when every body else deserts me. "You love your poor Isabel still! Oh, yes, still, still:" and each broken sentence was accompanied by a fresh burst of tears, and a closer embrace.

"My dear Isabel, pray compose yourself, do, my sweet child—agitation is so bad for you in your present delicate state. I shall be obliged to leave you, if you are not more tranquil; I shall, indeed, my love, that's a dear girl. So, sit down, and we will chat a little together. And now, my dear Isabel," continued Lady Anne, when her daughter had recovered her composure, "do tell me what this quarrel with Glenville is really about. I have read and heard such various versions of it; all agree, however, in blaming you as precipitate and *exigeante*. Now, my love, let me hear your story."

Isabel recapitulated all the circumstances of which the reader is already in possession. Lady Anne listened very composedly to the recital, and when it was ended, asked,

"And is that all you have to complain of, my love?"

"All?" repeated her daughter.

"My dear Isabel, is Glenville the only inconstant husband in the world?"

"My dear mother, he is not; but he is the only man who would force his wife to receive his——"

"Oh nonsense, my dear, why could'nt you take the matter as quietly as Lord Seaton did?"

"Then, in my place, you would have received her!"

"Certainly,—sooner let her in, than put myself out,—it is not too late yet. Your uncle Rochford has sounded Glenville, and on your agreeing to receive Lady Seaton, he will overlook your hastiness, and—"

"Never!" interrupted Isabel,—"never—never,—will I live under that man's roof one hour longer than I can help;—*he* overlook *my* hastiness!" she exclaimed, starting up in indignation; "he, the tyrant and traitor!—the smiling, polite tyrant,—and base, cold-blooded traitor!—*he* talk to *me* of forgiveness! Listen to *me*, mother; suppose I were mean enough, nay, and vicious enough, to associate with Lady Seaton; suppose I would forget and forgive, on her account, aye, and on account of other outrages and insults heaped upon me, and boasted of to my very face, for the last three years,—I never can forget, or forgive, his devilish project of *that* day; when he goaded me to madness, and then drove me to the brink of a precipice,—God! and does my mother tell me I should live with a demon like this?"

"My dear Isabel, you agitate me as well as yourself," replied the tranquil Lady Anne, "by all this vehemence. I give you my opinion, and that of every body who has heard the story,—and I most earnestly recommend you to consider well what you are about; do not, I implore you, give way to temper, in this crisis of your own fate:—you are now at the head of a splendid fortune; you have rank, fashion, beauty, every thing this world can offer; dearest child, thousands envy you the brilliant lot you are about to cast away in a moment of caprice; my sweet Isabel, be persuaded by me! what will a few hundreds a year be to you, accustomed to thousands?—and the world will be sure to turn its back upon you when you are only *poor* Lady Glenville. Oh, dear child, you will find a terrible change in people then!"

"Oh, I have not now to learn what the world is made of," answered Isabel; I am disgusted with it." After a pause she continued, "as my uncle Rochford offered to *intercede* for me with

Lord Glenville, perhaps he would have no objection to confer with him relative to a respectable maintenance. I ask no more, and even that much with reluctance; I would fain owe him nothing," she added, sighing.

"And where do you propose living?" asked the mother.

"When I leave my husband's house, will it not be natural to return to my father's?" asked Isabel, timidly.

"My dear Isabel, if your husband had really turned you out, your father house would open to receive you, but as you voluntarily quit the man you have vowed to love, and honour, I cannot, according to my conscience, support you in your defiance of duty to God, and respect for the world. I never will receive again,—at least under such circumstances,—as an inmate, a daughter I have married well."

Isabel's lip quivered; and her heart sickened, but she made no reply. Lady Anne soon after left her daughter, to return to dinner at Lord Rochford's.

Lady Glenville took up the pocket-bible that lay near her bed-side, and chanced to open it at the words,—"When my father and mother forsake me, he taketh me up."

She threw herself on her knees, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A travelling carriage stood, some days afterwards, before the door of Glenville House.

A lady, very pale and thin, descended the steps, supported by two gentlemen, and followed by a female attendant. She was handed into the carriage by the younger gentleman.

"You have a fine day for your journey," he remarked.

"Yes, very!" she replied.

"I believe all is now ready," said the elder gentleman. "You have not forgotten anything, Edwards?"

"No, my Lord, nothing."

"Then you had better set off, or you will not reach Canterbury till late. Good bye, my dear Isabel," and he touched coldly the pale cheek of the traveller.

d bye, dear uncle, and many thanks and apologies for
ole you have taken about me."
nville," she added, extending a hand to the other gen-
"I wish you well," and her voice slightly faltered.
niled, and nodded. The footman, after having closed
age door, mounted the box, the coachman touched his
nd the carriage was soon out of sight.
ravellers stopped for the night at Canterbury. And
enville was lying on the sofa near the fire, gazing on
nt flame, in one of those fits of abstraction, in which we
ore surprised her; one arm still fair, but no longer round-
; listless by her side, and the other holding a small vol-
en the door opened, and a waiter entered, to inform her
entleman, on very particular business, wished to see
efore she had time to reply, a tall man, wrapped in a
tood in the door-way. Scarcely looking at him, she
l him to a seat, quietly awaiting an explanation for this
.

are much changed, Lady Glenville," the stranger ob-

started at the sound of that voice, and now gazed in-
n the speaker; she gasped for breath, and her head
on her shoulder. When restored to consciousness,
object which met her eyes was that of a well-known
eeling by her side. At first her gaze was vague and
ed, like that of one awakened suddenly from a dream:
ecame earnest and searching. "Why have you come
he asked.
ee you."
ee me!—But have I not already refused to be seen by
at right have you," she added, making an effort to re-
r self-possession, "to force yourself thus into my pre-

nt right have I? the right of affection, Lady Glenville.
ook at me! am I not changed too,—aye, as much as
since last we met! and why am I thus changed? be-
my love for you. When you became ill, I became ill,—
u suffered, I suffered and you ask me, as you would a
acquaintance, what right I have unbidden to enter your
—what right!" he repeated vehemently.
generous to pursue me thus? I appeal to yourself, Ti-
s it?"
l, why did you refuse to see me before?—why, tell me

"Because I never will voluntarily find myself a second time in the company of the man who had once before insulted me."

"Insulted you, Isabel! but we will not dispute about the justice of that rather harsh term; granted, however, that I had insulted you on a former occasion, you had not to fear a repetition of the offence, as I had previously intimated my intention of leaving the country, perhaps for ever, and I merely requested permission to take leave of you; and yet that humble request you refused, and you tell me your motive for so doing was resentment for my previous misconduct; but, Isabel, that was not your motive; the reason you refused to see me, and the only one was, because you doubted yourself."

Isabel's hand was on the bell, when it was caught by Lord Tiverton. "You will only make a scene, Lady Glenville, for I warn you that the first man who enters the room I will thrust out of it. I am determined you shall hear me, and then a word from your lips will be sufficient to dismiss me: was it not so before? your womanly pride and dignity are up in arms,—I know they are, against my audacity for presuming to think, much less to say, that you do not abhor me as you try to persuade me and yourself that you do. It might, perhaps, have been better policy to have appeared a more humble adorer; but I wish to lay bare my whole heart to you, defects and all, and then, Isabel, decide whether that heart deserves to be cherished, or trampled on! In one respect, at least, you will allow, I differ from the many admirers by whom, during your married life, you have been surrounded; I had loved, and sought you, as Isabel Wilmot; I did not wait to see you the property of another, to discern your merit. Others bowed down before Lady Glenville, the idol of fashion; but I loved the woman in which I discovered those qualities now are so eagerly proclaimed by all, when she was as yet but a young aspirant for notice. I saw where, and how, and why, she differed from the throng of bold or vapid fashionable accomplished candidates for brilliant establishments, which thronged the ball and concert-rooms. I saw, and loved, the simplicity, and yet acuteness, of her mind, the truth, the affection, the spirited, yet gentle nature,—her polished vivacity, her deeply feeling heart. I spoke to her of a retirement in a remote, but beautiful part of England, of the happiness and utility of a country life; of the interest of a home, where affection and intelligence preside,—but Isabel, your mother had already spoiled the fair materials entrusted to her; worldliness had even then crept into that young heart, and stifled its generous impulses. Shame! said I to myself, on the

woman who rejects a true love, because it comes not encircled in a coronet, or shines not with the tinsel of fashion! From that hour I became a changed man, dissipated, almost heartless. I went abroad with my regiment; years passed away; I heard of your marriage with Warringdon, and I confess, heard it with perfect indifference;—so, thought I, she has at length attained the object of her ambition.

"Not very long afterwards, I unexpectedly succeeded to a title, and returned to England. I saw that you devotedly loved your husband, and you began to rise in my estimation, but I also very soon perceived that you were neglected by him, and in consequence unhappy. You then became an object of unworthy speculation to others; and I admired the easy contempt with which you treated their pretensions,—I insensibly fell back on my former feelings for you, but I was guarded in the expression of them; you will admit that I never passed the prescribed bounds, till the day Glenville left us together. When he banished you from his house, I offered you mine. I offered you myself too, my fortune, and my name; you rejected all, and dismissed me from your presence, and then, Isabel, I looked upon you not merely as the most engaging woman I had ever met, but as one to be worshipped for the energy of character which, in the midst of sorrow and insult, could remain firm to the stern command of duty, and could courageously spurn the tempter, though he came in the form of the man you love, for I knew you did love me. I heard that you were ill, dangerously ill; in agony, I waited the result,—you recovered,—I begged to see you—and you refused; I ascertained the day of your departure for Dover, and I set off, and awaited your arrival in this town;"—he paused.

"And what good do you propose either to me or to yourself, by this step?" asked Lady Glenville.

He was silent a moment. "Isabel, when first I declared my love, you did well to reject it; for it was not then perfectly worthy of you; besides, you were not then assured of its sincerity. And again, there still remained a hope of accommodation with your husband; you had still a mother, relations, friends, acquaintances,—you had much, much to give up; but now you are separated from your husband; you are censured by your friends, deserted by your acquaintances, abandoned even by your own mother. You are going abroad on an income of six hundred a year, alone; you have no child, or interest in life.

"Isabel, what is the world, or the world's laws to you? Have

you not already known and felt its nothingness? Of all those who fluttered about you, in the sunshine of your existence, who is there that comes to cheer you now, or bring hope and consolation? the brilliant Lady Glenville is forgotten by all but one, the man who loved her even in her childhood, seven years ago: ought not that man to be more to you, than a heartless, worthless world; ought he not, Isabel?"

"Yes! more, much more than this world, with all its honours, and all its splendors, would you be to me, if this world were all that stood between us;—but there is one thing dearer to me than the world's opinion, my own self-respect, and there is one Being dearer to me than you,—and that being is my God. Oh, had I known him earlier, I should have been spared all I suffer at this moment, for the feelings I now sacrifice in obedience to his will, in that case, never could have arisen, or at least, never have abided in my heart."

"Do you then reject my love, my sincere, devoted, unchanged, and unchangeable love? do you indeed prefer going alone through the world, Isabel? and is the wretchedness I shall endure, nothing to you, Isabel,—think again! and well, before you doom me and yourself to a life of misery."

"Tiverton, have you ever read this book?" she asked, handing him the little volume that lay by her.

"I cannot say that I have."

"Well, when you have read it, and carefully read it, and after you have prayed over it, come to me again and ask why I doom you and myself to a life of misery. Tiverton; if you had read that book, you would not have come as a tempter to the afflicted. Go travel, as you propose; think, and above all, pray, and then return to your country, and marry;" her voice here faltered for a moment, but she recovered her composure and proceeded. "But let not your wife be the daughter of a worldly mother."

"And now," she added, holding out her hand, "I will bid you farewell."

But he still lingered.

"Nay, 'tis useless, Tiverton, my mind is made up! God bless you, and forget me."

"Would I could!" he replied, in a voice hoarse from emotion,—"but that can never be!—No, I love you as I shall never love again; I honour you as I never honoured before! No, Isabel, I can never forget you!"

He pulled his hat over his brows, and left the room.

Isabel sank back on the sofa, where she lay some time so

pale and motionless, one might have almost doubted that she breathed, were it not for the low stifled sob, which at intervals escaped her.

The next day, Lady Glenville had a relapse, and was unable to proceed on her journey.

CHAPTER XIX.

And now will the reader travel with us to Paris, and, having been set down in the Rue Castilione, enter a *première* lighted up, and filled with company, composed of all that is distinguished by rank or talent, among the various nations of Europe; —poets, politicians, artists, mathematicians, generals, philosophers, and foreign ambassadors, he will there find assembled. Nor is the attraction of beauty wanting to complete the animation and embellishment of the rooms; and each lady has her little circle of admirers; but the largest group of this kind is, strange to say, formed round the plainest woman of the company;—it is fair to state, however, that she is also the hostess.

Almost every sentence she utters is followed by a laugh, or a bravo! from the gentlemen by whom she is surrounded; as she turns from the Frenchman to the Italian, from the Spaniard to the German, and addresses to each, in his own language, a few words, which are either sportive, profound, or enthusiastic according to the pursuit and turn of mind of her auditor; and yet, while charming those around her by her wit, or her eloquence, there is in her manner, at least, no attempt at display, no consciousness of power. She is brilliant, indeed, because she cannot be otherwise; and would have been equally so by her own fire-side.

A gentleman, who had just entered the room, advanced towards her.

"Well? have you found him?" the lady asked, in a low, hurried tone.

"Yes! after a long search, I have at length traced him to a café, in the Palais Royal, where, for the last three days and nights, he has been drinking and gambling with a set of low English blacklegs. I represented to him the cruelty of leaving home, for days, without having previously announced to his

wife his intention of absenting himself; and I tried to persuade him to return with me, but I am sorry to say, could not succeed."

"And what motive did he give? what answer?" inquired the lady.

"Oh! the usual answer to all argument, all entreaty!—a laugh."

The lady bit her lips, and looked thoughtful for a moment, but only for a moment; she quickly resumed her usual carelessness of demeanor. "Come, Sir Robert, give me your arm into the music room."

A few minutes afterwards, a voice of extraordinary power and compass, of thrilling expression, and clear and rapid execution, filled the apartments, and called forth on every side bursts of applause, even from professors of the art.

"What an uncommonly clever woman that is!"—observed a young man, to the gentleman that the lady of the house had called Sir Robert.—"But what is the reason, Turner, that Barham never appears at his wife's parties?—it looks odd, people say they don't live well together; that he thinks her ugly, and she thinks him silly; but nobody that I know has ever seen him. I understand he keeps odd company; your father was his guardian, was he not?"

Sir Robert bowed.

"Well, you ought, in that case, to be able to tell something about him?—Is he really a fool?"

"His wife has certainly somewhat the advantage of him in point of intellect," answered Sir Robert, dryly.

"I admire your caution, Turner," said his companion, smiling. "Singular, too, considering your position in the *menagé*."

"How do you mean?" asked Sir Robert.

His companion again smiled. "So you have never heard what people say of yourself, and the English Corinne here? of the brilliant wife and accomplished friend of poor silly Barham?"

Sir Robert Turner fixed his eyes steadily on the speaker.

"There is one subject, upon which I never permit a jest, and that is, when a lady is concerned. The first person, therefore, that you hear talking of Mrs. Barham, in any way but that of admiration and respect, refer him to me," and he immediately turned the conversation.

No one, throughout the evening, could have guessed from Mrs. Barham's manner, as she sang, danced, or talked, that her spirits were disturbed.

At length, much to the regret of all but the lady herself, her

rooms began to thin, and finally, of all the guests, none but Sir Robert remained.

"Will you come with me to the café, where he is?" she abruptly asked;—"I will speak with him myself."

Turner, greatly surprized, endeavoured to dissuade her,—but she insisted, and accordingly they drove to the café.—He alighted, and entered the house, where, after remaining about half an hour, he returned to the carriage, without Barham.

"I cannot induce him to come to you;—I fear he is utterly lost," he said in a tone of sorrow.

Maria jumped out of the carriage.

"Show me the way to the room where he is," she said hurriedly.

"My dear Madam, you are not surely going among those fellows! It is not a scene fit for a lady."

"The worse they are, the greater the necessity of getting him away from them," she replied.

"But it will be in vain; nothing you can say will make the slightest impression on him; pray do not think of exposing your feelings to this useless travail; he has become quite implacable of late."

But Mrs. Barham insisted, and he led the way; having opened the door of the apartment pointed out to her, she stood a moment on the threshold, to try and distinguish her husband among the group of coarse, slang-looking men, by whom he was surrounded. His face was flushed, and his whole manner that of a low, foolish profligate, playing, and losing, and alternately laughing and swearing vehemently at his ill fortune.

Mrs. Barham had approached near enough to touch her husband's elbow, before he was aware of her entrance, so completely absorbed was he by what was passing at the table.

He turned suddenly round, "Ah, is that you? What brings you here?"

"Come with me, for a moment, to the door," she replied. "I wish to speak a few words with you."

"Well, don't keep me long, then, for I am very busy just now," he said, following his wife out of the room.

"Barham, why have you not come home for three days?"

"Because I did not choose it," he replied. "I had a mind for some fun;—do you think I am going to ask your leave, whenever I may like to have a lark?"

"Why not at least tell me where you could be found? Why leave for days, uncertain what had become of you?"

"And if I had, Turner would have been after me, dogging

me every place I went. He thinks, because his old father kept me in leading strings once upon a time, that I am going to let him do the same now, but he will find himself mistaken."

"My dear Barham, I do not want to keep you in leading strings, I assure you," observed Turner quietly. "I merely offer you advice which you are at liberty, of course, to accept or reject, as you please; but which, for the sake of the old friendship subsisting between our families, however ungraciously you may receive it, I shall continue to offer. I can have no object in view but your own welfare."

"Aye, aye, I believe as much of that as I like," replied Barham, with a loud laugh; "that is always your gammon; but I am not such a spoony as you take me for."

Turner shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "Well, my good fellow, though you will not listen to my advice, will you listen to your wife?"

"Thank you! I am not going to make a Jerry-Sneak of myself, I can tell you that for your comfort. No, no, I am my own master, and I'll do as I like; so let her keep her advice for somebody who wants it. At Cralcourt she badgered me because I had a few running horses, and betted a little; and because I had hounds, and used to like a bit of fun with my grooms and huntsmen; and now I am here, she keeps poking at me, because I dine with a few friends. Ever since I married, it has been the same thing; she is always finding fault, whatever I do; and for that matter, she has no right to do so—"

"No? has not a wife a right to remonstrate with a husband?" asked Mrs. Barham.

"Yes, if a man marries out of his own head; it is all very well then. One may bear a little teazing, when one has brought a trouble upon oneself—that is all fair enough."

"What do you mean, Barham? I don't understand you," said Turner.

"Ah, she understands me," he replied, doggedly.

Turner glanced at Maria.

Could the woman he now saw standing humiliated, as a wife, before a drunken fool, be the same brilliant, animated, self-possessed, intellectual creature, that had dazzled a circle of accomplished judges?

"My God! what a fate for such a being!" he said to himself, as he observed her colour rise, at her husband's taunt. Maria had, however, too much habitual command over her feelings, to notice the speech.

"Well, my dear Barham," said she, "I have listened to you; will you now attend to me?"

"Yes; but don't make a long preachment of it, for I want to go back to my friends."

"You accuse me of badgering you," Mrs. Barham continued, "but how was that? have I ever used an unkind word, or even an impatient one? Have I, Barham?"

"I don't say you have; but you were always reminding me that I ought not to do this, that, or the other; advising, advising, from morning till night, instead of making me laugh, as you used to do. I did not marry to go to school, you may be sure. You were always telling me what a pleasant house you would keep, if I would but come to Paris;—well, I did, and you crammed it with clever people, and then wonder I don't like to stay at home."

"Well, dear Barham, then there shall be no more clever people at the house, if they keep you away from it. Can I say more than that? and, in turn, all I request of you is, merely this;—to ask to your house, not to a café, whatever company you please: or, at least, to tell me, when you leave home, how long you intend remaining absent. Is that fair, or not?"

"I told you before, I have a mind for fun, sometimes," replied Barham,

"Well, and cannot you have the fun at home?" inquired his wife.

"Oh, no, I can't:—what fun can one have with a wife stuck up near one. Oh, no; you go your way, and I go mine, and we shall always agree very well."

"But, Barham, your way is leading you, fast and sure, to ruin. You cannot have fun without money,—what will you do when it is all spent?" asked Maria.

"Oh, that time is a good way off, yet," he replied laughing.

"Not so distant as you think," continued his wife. "Remember what you owed before you left England, and how much you are losing every night at play, and——"

"Oh d——n it! there you are, again, at the old story!" he exclaimed bursting impatiently from her and returning to his party.

"Oh, why did I marry a fool?" exclaimed Maria, throwing herself into the carriage. "My God! to think of being tied for life to a creature like that! a creature that cannot be made even to feel for himself! and *I* to be obliged to bend low to *him!* to be obliged to suppress my indignation at his insults, and my

contempt at his folly, in order, if possible, to keep him within bounds! My unfortunate child! what is to become of her!"

"What other woman could have sustained herself at all, under such a fate!" asked Sir Robert;—"how I do respect and admire you."

"Respect and admire!" Maria repeated with bitterness: "Oh, no, you despise me;—you would despise the woman who merely consented to marry a fool because he was rich; how much more must you despise her who planned and plotted to marry him! Barham spake but the truth when he said he never wanted to marry me. I deserved the taunt, and, therefore, I was obliged to bear it patiently, humbly. Ah! little does the world know, while I talk and laugh, how I writhe under the deep, deep humiliation, the unutterable and innumerable mortifications of my lot! Insulted by a creature I despise; married to a man I am ashamed to acknowledge! You will wonder, perhaps, why I go into the world at all, under such circumstances: but I should lose my senses if I did not, sometimes, force my thoughts into another direction. Besides, when in society, such as that of to-night, I forget that I am Barham's wife; I feel a momentary triumph in the mind, which enables me to rise above the degradation,—the contemptible position that, at other times, bows down my spirit to the earth. And, then, the remorse I feel! the remorse, when I think that, had Barham married some pretty girl he liked, he might have turned out differently: to think that I have the wreck of his fate to answer for, as well as my own miserable accountability!"

"And is this the woman the world represents as unfeeling!" exclaimed her companion, half aloud.

"I cannot wonder that it should," observed Maria, "for I long thought that I was so myself."

"But I never did," said Turner; "I judged more favourably, and, as it has proved, more correctly, of you, than either yourself or the world had done. I early saw that your nature had been disturbed, and put out of its place; that you had been so often told you had no sensibility, and had been so carefully instructed to glory in your callousness, as a proof of the superiority of your understanding, that you had, at length, become temporarily, owing to your tuition, the worldly-hardened character your teachers persuaded you that you were, from original disposition. But I could not believe that one, so beloved in her neighbourhood, of whom I heard so many acts of charity, kindness, and generosity, could be wanting, essentially, in a feeling heart. No, I could never believe that possible, and I was right.

I never could believe that God would have given such an intellect without giving a heart too; you were not merely intended to dazzle, but to bless also; you were intended for a higher and a better vocation than the one allotted you by your mother."

"And yet, perhaps, she was not so much to blame, after all," observed Maria, "according to the opinions she held; for, intent as she was upon marrying her daughters well, and seeing me unattractive in person, and, therefore, unlikely to succeed, as it is called, unless pushed forward, she found herself necessarily compelled to stifle my sensibility, lest it should interfere with my judgment, and prevent my taking proper measures to secure a good 'establishment.'"

"And so you married Barham because your mother persuaded you that you were not a woman to be loved? My God! if we had but met sooner!" he continued, seemingly affected.

The carriage just then stopped at the door of her house, and Mrs. Barham also appeared agitated.

"I over-heard your exclamation," she said.

"And it has offended you?" he asked.

"I will be candid with you in all things;—no, it has not offended, but it has grieved me, because I must no longer meet you as I have done."

"Forget what I said,—it escaped me unintentionally, I solemnly assure you,—forget," replied Turner.

"I cannot forget any thing you ever said, Turner," replied Maria; "besides, I have been already informed that we are commented on; yet, while I felt there existed no grounds for censure, I was reluctant to give up the society of a tried and valued friend, because fools talked, and I therefore deferred, from day to day, coming to a decision. I have always had too little respect for the opinion of others, but—"

"But," interrupted Turner, "if you saw no necessity this morning for our separation, why should any thing I have said to-night cause you to alter your opinion? You do not judge of me as a mere man of the world, I hope, nor of yourself as a giddy woman; why may we not meet as heretofore, I promising never again to express a vain, and, what is worse, a criminal regret, with regard to the past, and you undertaking to forgive and forget what has been said? I do not ask to be allowed to come as often to your house as formerly, for I am aware my visits have been remarked, and I had intended, in consequence, withdrawing myself, in a degree, from your society;—you will allow me, however, will you not, occasionally, to see you?"

"Better not, for some time, at least," replied Maria. "It is not that I think so badly of you, or so meanly of myself, as to *fear* you; but it subjects to a strong and disadvantageous contrast one that I am bound, as much as possible, to regard, and will make my duty still more irksome than it is. I shall leave Paris for a few weeks; meantime, persuade, if you can, poor Barham to play and drink less, and, when I return, you will probably be setting out for England;—Good night, and God bless you, till we meet again."

Turner was silent for a few moments, and the usually calm expression of his countenance became disturbed. "You are right," he said, at length, and turned from the door.

Maria hurried up stairs to her own room, and thence to an adjoining apartment. She noiselessly approached a bed, where a child lay asleep, and which was calling, in unconscious fondness, through its slumbers, on its mother.

"My darling!" she exclaimed passionately, "your mother is near you. Pure, innocent creature!" she continued, kneeling by the bed-side, while tears trickled down her cheeks, "you first taught me that I had a heart! my child! my all, in this world! the only being that loves me, and that I love, except ——, but hush, I must not even think of *him*, *here*, by *her* bedside. And yet," she continued, unwittingly pursuing the very train of thought she had, the instant before, condemned, "is it my fault, if I love him? against a brilliant, or insinuating man of the world, I should have been upon my guard; but how could I be prepared for the gradual, scarcely perceptible, influence of active, undeviating, intelligent goodness; of generosity, disinterestedness, unbounded, and unostentatious benevolence? how could I imagine that there was sin, or danger, in esteeming one whom his equals honoured, and the poor adored? And the first prayer that I ever uttered from the heart, was it not at his suggestion, when my child was ill? Oh, if I had been his wife! Three months after I quitted Ireland, with Barham, he came into our neighbourhood!—but no, the woman who could sell herself for gold was not worthy of a better fate! I do not complain,—I deserve it all, and more."

CHAPTER XX.

rH passed, and Mrs. Barham returned from her tour.—
l letters had arrived during the interval, but which had
n forwarded, from uncertainty as to her address, in her
ents from place to place. Among those now laid before
s one of an old date from her mother, informing her of
s quarrel with her husband, and of her approaching se-
n; throwing the whole blame, as was to be expected
ır tone with Lady Glenville herself, on her daughter, an-
ıg her firm determination of leaving her, for the future,
whims and absurdities, and mentioning her daughter's
to her protection, and her refusal.

e shall have mine, then!" exclaimed Maria. "Isabel,
onged your sister, when you did not write to tell her
u wanted a home;—yes, for, even in my most selfish and
ıd days, I should not have given you the answer your
gave. Oh, I wish I had received this letter before;
will think me so barbarous never to have taken any notice
ıll this time; and now where will a letter reach her? for,
ng to the date of my mother's communication, she must
ready left Glenville House,—and ill too,—poor Isabel!"

was sitting down to write to her sister, under cover to
nne, when a letter, just come by the post, was handed
was from Edwards, Lady Glenville's woman, inform-
of her sister's illness at Canterbury, and that her Lady
strictly forbidden her communicating the intelligence to
ther, she dared not disobey her commands; although
easy at so heavy a responsibility resting upon herself
ıhe therefore took the liberty of letting Mrs. Barham
ıady Glenville's dangerous state, and begging her in-
ns how to act.

evening Maria and her little girl were on the road to
ı.

ithstanding all the precautions which tenderness could
, to prepare Lady Glenville for a meeting with her sis-
agitation had nearly proved fatal to her.

ı will live with me, will you not? my own dear Isabel?"
Glenville leaned her head on her sister's bosom, and
ı moments neither of them spoke.

"Yes!" Isabel replied at length, "*if* I live it shall be with you, Maria. I wish I had known you sooner and better. I should not have been thrown on the dangerous sympathy of another. I never did you justice, Maria!"

"A great change has come over me," said Maria, "since we were girls together, I have learned to feel—the great barrier that used to separate our minds is removed. My character has been softened, and your's strengthened, by the few years of our married lives. We can now be, what we never were before,—sisters in heart! counselling, sympathizing friends!—On *one* subject only we will never speak, because it is one we must not even think upon."

"True!" replied Isabel. "But to keep a constant and effectual watch over our thoughts, we shall need assistance. Do you ever pray, Maria?"

"No, but I will; "her sister answered, pressing her hand.

"Your child shall be mine; we will educate her together; and God grant she may have a happier fate than either of her mothers!" said Isabel, throwing her arms around her adopted child.

CHAPTER XXI.

We will now pass over five years, and beg the reader to return again to Wilmot Castle. Lady Anne and her husband are sitting together.

"Now, is not that ridiculous? Maria, of all people upon earth, to set up for sentiment! She marries a man she cares nothing about, because he has a good fortune. Well, he loves his fortune—his estate is sold—he goes mad out of a fit of drunkenness, and the world won't persuade her to send him at once, quietly, to a proper place of confinement. 'He would be treated cruelly,' she says, so she insists on taking care of him herself. To talk in that way, she must be as mad as he is. I have not patience with such nonsense—is it not provoking, Wilmot?"

"Why, as Maria has patience, I think we may. I am only sorry she has such a miserable lot!" replied the father.

"And Isabel encourages her in the scheme—applauds it of all

Such an account as Rochford gives of them!—he was
their neighbourhood some weeks since,—it is really
ɔly to think of it—they are becoming regular Metho-
each charity children their catechism, and make flan-
ɔoats for old women! My dear Wilmot, I am really
ɔd how you can laugh at such conduct."
', my dear Anne, I think that they are, of the two, bet-
ɔyed even in 'making flannel petticoats for old women'
lirting with young men. By the way, who was it that
married?"
knows! some nobody or other he chose for her piety.
I wrote me word. I never thought much of his sense,
ɔwever, I am sorry now I formerly discouraged his ad-
ɔ Isabel; yet how could I foresee his uncle and three
would die, and make him a Marquis? I did all for the
vever," said Lady Anne with a sigh.
'ou know what would have been better than 'doing for
' as you call it, my dear Anne?"
ıt?" asked his wife.
ıave done nothing at all."
Anne paused, and then said, "You are right."

THE END.

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